

Instructions and Template

For Base4NFDI Basic Service Proposals
Integration Phase

Version 2.3
2025-10-02

I General Instructions

The proposal template provides a mandatory structure and a number of tables to be completed. Apart from that, applicants may decide how to present the content. All sections of text in grey are intended to provide guidance for completing the proposal and should be deleted in your proposal submission.

Proposals for Base4NFDI Basic Services must be submitted via the spokesperson of the NFDI Section supporting the proposal to base4nfdi-office@lists.nfdi.de in PDF format. This implies that the proposal as well as results and work progress of the Basic Service has been presented and discussed in a Section meeting and was met with approval.

Further information about the next submission deadline and the whole evaluation process can be found at the Base4NFDI website, which will be updated continuously^{1,2}. Proposals must be written in A4 format, 11 pt Arial font with line spacing of 1.5. The length of the proposal may vary depending on the complexity of the proposed service but may not exceed 15 pages (excluding cover page, Gantt chart in chapter 5.2, financial tables of chapter 6 and appendix). A different font or line spacing may be used in tables, figures, footnotes and the list of references, provided the text is still easy to read. The proposal and appendices are to be written in English (BE). Please use the proposal template contained in part II of this form.

The requested funding amounts should not include programme allowances (for indirect project costs). Budgeted allowances will come from Base4NFDI flex funds and vary by the phase (Initialisation, Integration, Ramp-Up for operation) for which funding is requested.

Funding – with the exception of well-argued cases – will be limited to a maximum of two years and a maximum of €447.300,00 per year³.

¹ <https://base4nfdi.de/process/how-to-apply>

² <https://base4nfdi.de/process/decision-making>

³ An additional financial top-up to the stated amount - to compensate increased personnel costs based on updated DFG Personnel Rates - is fully subject to the decision of the NFDI Consortia Assembly. For further information please refer to <https://base4nfdi.de/process/how-to-apply>, section “How much is funded per phase each year?” or contact base4nfdi-office@lists.nfdi.de in the case that answers are not available online.

For further information please refer to <https://base4nfdi.de> or contact Base4NFDI base4nfdi-office@lists.nfdi.de whenever answers are not available online.

Changes to version 2.2 of this document (2025-03-07) are highlighted with grey background colour. Change notes can be found on <https://base4nfdi.de/resources/templates-logos>. Please remove all remaining background highlighting for the final proposal.

We encourage you to publish your proposal (with or without funding tables) on Zenodo or similar, at some point after the submission.

For resubmissions, please make all changes visible, highlight revisions, and indicate how feedback from the first submission, e.g. the evaluation by the Technical Expert Committee, has been addressed.

II Proposal Template – Integration Phase

1 General Information

- Name of proposed Basic Service (in English)
- Acronym of the proposed Basic Service
- Service "subtitle" explaining key functionality
- Corresponding NFDI Section
- Lead institution

The lead institution is the coordinating institute for the Basic Service for the current stage of development.

Please enter the institute's name and address.

- Name of lead institution principal investigator

The primary contact and coordinator of the Basic Service.

Please enter the name and email address.

- **Authors of the proposal**

[optional] Credit the authors of the proposal if their work is not otherwise acknowledged in this proposal.

- Participating institutions

Table 1: List of participating institutions

Principal Investigator	Institution, location	Contact E-mail	Member in [consortium] ⁴	Funding requested [yes no]

List all participating institutions. If applicable, make clear if there are partner institutions without funding.

- **Initialisation Phase**

Provide information on the start date of the Initialisation phase, the planned runtime and the estimated end (month / year).

- **Planned duration of the Integration phase**

The Integration phase typically runs 2 years.

- **Statement on efforts required by consortia for integration of service**

Briefly explain what is required or what effort is needed by the consortia to integrate your service (time, personnel, technical, organisational or other requirements, etc.). This text will

⁴ Name one DFG consortium the institution is or has a route to become a member of and through which funds should be appropriated if this proposal is approved.

be presented as a short explainer to the consortia in the questionnaire, where they will vote on the proposal. (max. 200 words)

- Summary of the proposal in English and German
up to 1,500 characters each, including spaces

2 Summary of Initialisation Phase Results (max 3 pages)

2.1 Change in Background and Motivation since the Start of the Initialisation Phase

Are there any changes compared to the proposal in the Initialisation Phase? If yes, please explain briefly, if no, please state 'There are no changes compared to the proposal in the initialisation phase'.

If there have been any conditions or notes for the application for the Integration phase issued by the **Technical Expert Committee** in their proposal review for the initialisation phase, please share details on how these issues were addressed or resolved / what changes were made to the work plan?

2.2 Results of Initialisation Phase

Please report on the status and results of initialisation phase work and on deviations from the proposed work plan. Please also describe the work that still needs to be completed by the end of the initialisation phase in order to begin the orderly transition to the Integration phase.

2.2.1 Interim Report on Requirements for Finalisation of the Initialisation Phase

Please provide an overview on the Base4NFDI Initialisation Phase requirements - as listed below - for finalisation of the initialisation phase that reflects the current status of service development. The overview should contain information on the status of the required deliverables D.TA1.1 - D.TA1.5⁵ in the form of a short summary, a list of outcomes (e.g., links to publications, repositories or other documentation) and if necessary an outlook on plans for completion until the end of the current phase. All relevant information should be in this proposal, while detailed information about the current state of your initialisation project will be documented in a report generated from OpenProject which will be passed on as an attachment to this proposal during its evaluation (including all required deliverables D.TA1.1 – D.TA1.7⁶).

5 These deliverable notations were introduced by version 3.3 (after March 2025) of the Initialisation phase proposal template. If you applied with an earlier version of the template / prior to March 2025, these correspond to the deliverables 1.4.1 Requirements analysis, 1.4.2 Software evaluation, 1.4.3 Service design, 1.4.4 Service prototype and 1.4.5 Service piloting and user testing. Please contact the Base4NFDI team for more information.

Further instructions on how to document the required initialisation phase deliverables can be found on Zenodo^{7,8}. The required deliverables contain information on target group definitions for the service, use cases and benefit descriptions per target group, results from preparational work, and preliminary concepts (e.g., technical, implementation and training).

a) Requirements Analysis (D.TA1.1)

Due: 3 months after start date

Percent finished [via Open Project]:

Status: survey | analysis | report / planned | running | finished

Overview of relevant outcomes: Name/link to relevant outcomes. A comprehensive summary can be found in the Open Project attachment to this proposal.

Outlook: [If not finished 100 %, how do you plan to proceed?]

b) Software Evaluation (D.TA1.2)

Due: 6 months after start date

Percent finished [via Open Project]:

Status: analysis | report / planned | running | finished

Overview of relevant outcomes: Name/link to relevant outcomes. A comprehensive summary can be found in the Open Project attachment to this proposal.

Outlook: [If not finished 100 %, how do you plan to proceed?]

c) Service Design (D.TA1.3)

Due: 6 months after start date

Percent finished [via Open Project]:

Status: analysis | report / planned | running | finished

Overview of relevant outcomes: Name/link to relevant outcomes. A comprehensive summary can be found in the Open Project attachment to this proposal.

Outlook: [If not finished 100 %, how do you plan to proceed?]

d) Service Prototype (D.TA1.4)

Due: 12 months after start date

Percent finished [via Open Project]:

Status: prototype / planned | running | finished

Overview of relevant outcomes: Name/link to relevant outcomes. A comprehensive summary can be found in the Open Project attachment to this proposal.

6 Initialisation phase proposal templates prior to version 3.3 do not have corresponding required deliverables for D.TA1.6 and D.TA1.7.

7 Base4NFDI - Requirements for Completion of Initialisation Phase
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11519610>

8 Base4NFDI - HowTo: Reporting in Initialisation Phase <https://zenodo.org/records/13384157>

Outlook: [If not finished 100 %, how do you plan to proceed?]

e) **Service Piloting and User Testing (D.TA1.5)**

Due: 12 months after start date

Percent finished [via Open Project]:

Status: piloting / planned | running | finished

Overview of relevant outcomes: Name/link to relevant outcomes. A comprehensive summary can be found in the Open Project attachment to this proposal.

Outlook: [If not finished 100 %, how do you plan to proceed?]

Attach a current version of the documentation in Open Project as an export in the form of a PDF report from the TA1 Work Space with up-to-date information on D.TA1.1 - D.TA1.5⁹.

2.2.2 Other

[Optional] Additional information on outcomes of the Initialisation phase (e.g. the number of workshops and/or educational events provided and resources (documentation, reports, designs, training,...) published if not covered above) or if there is something relevant to report on D.TA1.7 (Base4NFDI outreach events).

2.3 Update on Technical Readiness Level (TRL) of the Proposed Basic Service

Please provide an updated Technical Readiness Level (TRL) of the proposed Basic Service.

Supply a TRL of the current version of your Basic Service framework (at the time of application for integration) and the targeted TRL by the end of the initialisation phase. The required minimum TRL to enter the Integration phase is 5-6¹⁰. For the definition see the initialisation phase template¹¹. If you are unsure how to deal with TRLs when the basic service is more focused on non-technical topics such as consulting, training, standards and information, please refer to the notes in "Service integration procedures"¹² on how TRLs can be interpreted in such contexts.

3 Working Concept for the Development of the Basic Service (max 2.5 pages)

Describe the overall concept for the development of the Basic Service with regard to the Integration and Ramp-Up phase. Describe the Integration phase in more detail. Note that for the Integration phase the involvement of the consortia, the first outline of a business and operational model and concepts for training (relating to identified target groups and content) as well as outreach need to be addressed.

⁹ Compare footnote 5.

¹⁰ <https://base4nfdi.de/process/criteria-for-basic-services>

¹¹ Most recent version can be downloaded from: https://base4nfdi.de/resources/templates_logos

¹² Report on Base4NFDI service integration procedures, <https://zenodo.org/records/17206953>

3.1 Service Integration Concept

Describe in particular the integration with the services of the partner consortia. Also address your strategy to ensure interoperability with relevant consortia services (e.g., workshops, incubators, engagement). Summarise your awareness of how your service engages with the NFDI landscape at technical, semantic, organisational and / or legal level - based on the findings from the initialisation phase. Where applicable, describe how your service is built based on commonly accepted community standards.

Provide information on status and/or plans of uptake of the service in NFDI Consortia, e.g. provide the name of the NFDI Consortium and describe in brief the status of contact, work in progress, possible incubators, possible planning, and/or other means of integration.

What key performance indicators (KPIs) will be used to measure the success of your service by the end of the Integration phase? Consider basic technical KPIs for your service but also in regard to communication and training activities. Please remember that during the Ramp-Up phase, the service needs to scale to a larger user group. Clear estimates for requirements should be determined by the end of the Integration phase. We recommend that you consider a consultation with the Base4NFDI team, e.g. the Service Stewards and TA2, on this topic.

The results of the Integration phase need to be made available via an open license. Please explicitly confirm that your service still complies with the openness concept. If you see a necessity to change the openness concept of your service (e.g., use of non-openly licensed software components, restrictions on openly licensed publication of code or other output, or the incorporation of proprietary software), you need to explicitly state the reasons.

Please provide initial or updated information on accessibility measures in your service.

Consultation of the project's accessibility guidelines¹³ or staff is recommended if needed.

Please clarify any changes regarding overlap with EOSC EU Node services¹⁴, taking into account the development of new services within the EU Node and provide an updated assessment if you service will be complementary, overlapping, or an entirely new offering.

3.2 Future Development and Ramp-Up Outlook

Describe the envisaged transition to the Ramp-Up phase. Please describe which quality criteria you consider relevant for your service (e.g., what users can and cannot expect, availability, support, uptime, etc.) and how your business model for eventual service provisioning would look like.

How do you envisage your service becoming interoperable with the EOSC EU services¹⁵ or describe any plans to integrate with or reuse elements of these services. A comprehensive

¹³ Base4NFDI– Guidelines on Application of Web Accessibility; <https://zenodo.org/records/15719661>

¹⁴ <https://open-science-cloud.ec.europa.eu/services>

¹⁵ <https://open-science-cloud.ec.europa.eu>

summary is provided in this policy paper¹⁶. Describe any other existing relations with EOSC (e.g., have you worked with task forces of EOSC or are you planning to be involved?). Add any events (conferences or hackathons) you attended or plan to attend in the EU context.

3.3 Risks and Challenges

Give an update on the risks and challenges that may occur through operations of the service on behalf of the Integration or Ramp-Up phase.

Describe the main risks that could affect the success of the project. For each risk, assess its likelihood (e.g., low, medium, high) and severity (e.g., minor, moderate, critical). Include a clear mitigation strategy to reduce the potential impact or likelihood of each risk. Risks may be technical, organizational, financial, regulatory, or related to external dependencies. Use a table or list format for clarity.

Table 2: Risk Management

Risk Description	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation Strategy
Describe the potential issue	e.g., medium	e.g. high	Describe how the risk will be managed or reduced
Godzilla eats the computing centre	rare	very high impact	Full off-site backup copies will ensure a possible rebuild of the system
...			

4 Support Actions from Base4NFDI / NFDI Sections, and Integrating NFDI Consortia / Efforts (max 1 page)

Base4NFDI will offer support on overarching aspects of service development (e.g., training, user experience and testing, community engagement and networking). Please specify the additional support you explicitly need from the Sections and from Base4NFDI or any other support. An example is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Support needed from Base4NFDI / Service Stewards / Section

¹⁶ Base4NFDI Policy Paper: "Base4NFDI Services and EOSC: Guidance for Interoperability", Version 1; <https://zenodo.org/records/13946300>

Support from	Work package / Description of contribution	Contact person
Base4NFDI	Support organising workshop/training	Lara Mustermann, Musterinstitut, lara.mustermann@musterinstitut.de
Section Metadata		Lara.mustermann@mustermail.de
...		

Please describe the contributions required from each consortium to integrate the Basic Service with their respective consortium services. If these are common to all, please provide a list of all the consortia that will integrate the Basic Service in the Integration phase. A letter of commitment from these consortia is required.

Table 4: Contributions required from the integrating consortia

Support from	Involved effort	Consortium (contact)
Consortium 1	Provision of resources, participation in incubator project	Max Mustermann, Musterinstitut, max.mustermann@mustermail.de
Consortium 2		
...		

5 Work Programme (ca. 6 pages)

This section should describe the structure of your work programme for the Integration phase as it relates to the overall objectives of the proposed Basic service.

5.1 Overview of Work Packages

The work programme for the integration of a Basic Service is divided into different work packages, deliverables, and milestones within. Please add all institutes working in a work package and the institute leading the work package. An overview of what is expected from a basic service in each phase can also be found on our website¹⁷.

We recommend a work package on community engagement and communication to allocate resources to, for example, the realisation of but also participation in workshops. Special attention should be paid to centrally coordinated activities and offers by Base4NFDI staff like a monthly Jour Fixe with Base4NFDI and the other service teams, **regular, needs-driven consulting regarding training, with a focus on training curation, curation and piloting - continuing the target group and learning goals definition from the Initialisation phase.** Resources should be put aside for EOSC interoperability activities. It is expected the team will contribute to a checklist for EOSC interoperability and an EOSC Connectivity meeting during the phase organised by the Base4NFDI

¹⁷ <https://base4nfdi.de/process/what-is-expected-for-each-phase>

team. This also includes being aware of developments of onboarding resources to EOSC documentation from the EOSC Association and other relevant frameworks relevant to the particular service.

Please consider these requirements when planning your work programme for the Integration phase:

- Deliverable D.Int.1: Documentation of service integration and success
- Deliverable D.Int.2: Documentation of service maturity
- Deliverable D.Int.3: Documentation of sustainability
- Deliverable D.Int.4: Provision of service portfolio metadata
- Deliverable D.Int.5: Self-assessments of software quality
- Deliverable D.Int.6: Documentation of usability
- Deliverable D.Int.7: User-centred documentation and training
- Deliverable D.Int.8: Short overview about the outcomes of the Integration phase and presentation in a section meeting
- Deliverable D.Int.9: Participation in Base4NFDI outreach events

For more information please see the detailed requirements documentation¹⁸ or contact the Base4NFDI team for consultation.

Note that deliverables are tangible outcomes of the work (software, documents, plans, designs, training material...), while milestones can signify conceptual changes or specific moments in time. Here the achievement of the goals of one of the development phases and the transition to the next phase is considered a milestone.

Please add the nine Base4NFDI deliverables to your work plan (with their original notation), preferably as a separate work package, with relations to your own work packages. Alternatively to a separate work package you may include them into your own, but keeping their names and notations.

Table 5: Overall work programme with work packages, deliverables, milestones, and responsible partner.

Work package	Deliverables (D) and milestones (M)	Responsible partner	Related work packages
1. content	D1.1 D1.2 M1.1 ...	institution	
2. other content	D1.1 D1.2 M1.1 ...	Some other institution	
...	

¹⁸ Requirements for Completion of the Integration Phase. <https://zenodo.org/records/17107045>

9. Base4NFDI mandatory items	D.Int.1 Documentation of service integration and success		
	D.Int.2 Service maturity report		
	D.Int.3 Documentation of sustainability		
	...		

5.2 Detailed Work Programme

Please provide a detailed description of the work packages, using one subsubsection per work package. Please include a Gantt chart summarising the duration, dependencies, deliverables and milestones of the WPs. The Gantt chart should be integrated with the proposal but will not be added to the total page count.

5.2.1 WP1

5.2.2 WP2

5.2.3 WP3

6 Funding Request

List the task area in the table heading and the individual work packages in the table. Add additional lines as necessary.

Table 6: Funding request by work package

	Year 1	Year 2	Total (in €)
Work package 1			
Work package 2			
Work package 3			
...			
Total project funds			

List the name of each institution, adding additional lines if necessary.

Table 7: Funding request by institution

	Year 1	Year 2	Total (in €)
Institution	Totals in €		
Lead institution			
Participating institution 1			
Participating institution 2			
Participating institution 3			
...			
Total project funds			

Please note the current staff funding rates of the DFG at the time of application, only on this basis funding is possible¹⁹. In addition, please keep in mind the maximum budget that can be requested in the Integration phase (cf. Section I).

Any proposed instrumentation funding must be explained separately below the table.

Table 8: Funding request by funding category

	Year 1	Year 2 (if applicable)	Total (in €)
DFG funding category	Totals in €		
Staff			
Direct project costs			
Total project funds			

List the number of **person months** for which funding is requested under the given staff categories of the DFG Personnel Rates.

Table 9: Funding request by staff category

	Year 1	Year 2 (if applicable)
Staff category	Number of person months	Number of person months
Postdoctoral researchers and comparable		
Doctoral researchers and comparable		
...		

6.1 Other Funding Sources

Please indicate whether the proposed service itself has already received or is currently receiving funding by Base4NFDI or other sources, or whether partners have received funding specifically for

¹⁹ https://www.dfg.de/formulare/60_12/

this service. In particular, specify any past, current, or planned funding related to the development of the service, to ensure clarity on what is to be financed within this proposal and to avoid overlaps (especially with DFG funding).

On the following page you will find a template to confirm the accuracy of the information provided in this application (Principal Investigator) as well as the commitment of all participating institutions (institute directors) listed in section "1 General information". You can reproduce the template accordingly. Please provide confirmation for the lead and every participating institution listed in Table 1.

[NAME OF INSTITUTION]

We herewith certify that we have submitted this proposal to Base4NFDI and that the information provided therein is accurate.

Head of the lead / participating institution

First name last name

City, date, signature

Principal Investigator

First name last name

City, date, signature

III Appendix

The appendix may only include the following information and documents:

a) Acknowledgement

Any acknowledgements, e.g. to identify a research funder or grant id, should be placed in a separate section immediately before the reference list.

b) Bibliography and list of references

Please list all sources and data repositories, information infrastructures and software that you have used to describe the status quo in your proposal. Indicate which sources were written or developed by members of the participating institutions (for example, by highlighting the source in bold).

c) Letters of commitment (LoC) supporting the Basic Service development (cf. section 4 of this form)

It is standard for project partners to commit to the project activities. Partners are named in the paragraph "general information - participating institutions" of this template. Letters of commitment (LoC) are requested only in three cases: 1) from an NFDI consortium that commits to co-develop the service with consortium funds a LoC should detail the specific contributions of this consortium to the service, and/or 2) from an NFDI consortium that commits to use the service a LoC should outline the concrete steps to be taken by this consortium towards this goal, or 3) from other persons or institutions - also external to the NFDI - that do not actively participate but contribute to the service in any form.

LoCs can be submitted until two weeks after the application deadline.

Please do not provide generic consortia support letters. General support including the approval of 50% of the NFDI consortia will be requested in a separate process by the Base4NFDI coordination team.