

# Helmholtz International

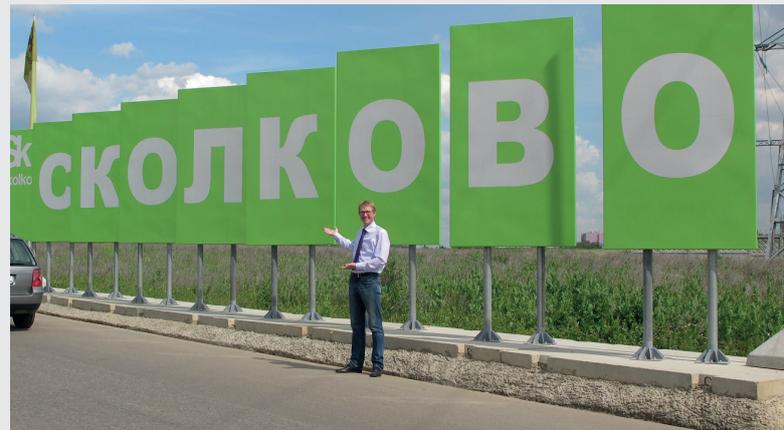
On this special page, we report news from the Helmholtz offices in Brussels, Moscow and Beijing several times a year. Specific focus is on cooperation and partnership ventures of the Helmholtz Association in Russia, China and the EU as well as on selected international research policy news.

## News from the Moscow Office:

### International Research Groups Establish Research Centres at Skolkovo Tech

The Skolkovo Institute of Science and Technology (SkolTech) is a non-governmental training and research institute that was established in Skolkovo near Moscow in 2011 under active participation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). SkolTech is a new model of Russian technical universities, which provides education and training to a new generation of young, innovation-oriented researchers and entrepreneurs. Even though the campus will be fully completed only in 2014, a pilot group of 34 students has started their three-year masters study course on 6 August 2012. After an introductory course in Skolkovo, the students can choose to spend their first year of study either at the Imperial College London, the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH Zürich - Swiss Federal Institute of Technology), the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology or at the MIT.

The SkolTech will offer programmes in five different fields: Information technologies, energy, biomedicine, astronautics and civilian nuclear research. Up to 15 research centres will be created to promote basic research and applied technologies in these fields, which were identified as being of strategic importance to Russia. Each centre is to receive funding of 6 to 12 million US dollar per year for a period of five years. The second round of calls for application is open until the end of November



Dr Martin Sandhop, Head of the Helmholtz Moscow Office, in front of the name banner of the newly founded SkolTech Institute. Photo: Helmholtz Association

2012. Applications can be submitted by bilateral research teams consisting of representatives from a Russian institution and a foreign partnering organisation.

Terms and conditions as well as documentation for applicants:  
[web.mit.edu/sktech/initiatives](http://web.mit.edu/sktech/initiatives).

### Russian "Megagrants" Extended

The Russian research ministry has announced that Russian megagrant projects from the first round of calls for application can be extended following a running period of three years. Moreover, up to 40 new grantees can be selected in the context of a new call for applications in October this year. As of now, however, applications have to provide proof of co-financing on part of the applicant.

In 2010, 40 top-class researchers with an international reputation received 150 million rouble each, in order to, by 2013, develop and subsequently head a research laboratory at a Russian university. In October 2012, applications for an extension of funding can be submitted. Yet the respective Russian university must contribute its own funds, equalling the total grant funds, one year after the extension has been granted. The applications need to detail in how far the individual projects are linked to

the future concepts of the universities and in how far they will contribute to shaping the Russian scientific landscape. The selection committee is staffed with international experts.

Applications for new megagrants can be likewise submitted in October. The grants can be applied for not only via universities, but now also via member institutes in the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS). The grant has been reduced to 90 million rouble (approximately 2.2 million Euro) per project for a period of three years. An important condition for participation is the provision of proof of off-budget funds totalling a minimum of 25 per cent of the government grant.

More detailed information in October 2012:  
[bit.ly/JCrjsL](http://bit.ly/JCrjsL)

## News from the Beijing Office:

### China and Germany Increase Research Cooperation

During the 2nd German-Chinese intergovernmental consultations at the end of August, Prof. Dr Annette Schavan, German Federal Minister of Education and Research, met with Minister Wan Gang (Ministry of Science and Technology, MoST) and Minister Yuan Guiren (Ministry of Education, MoE) to agree on an intensified cooperation in the field of LED technologies and marine research. Moreover, the ministers exchanged views regarding already agreed on measures such as the establishment of a Chinese-German Wissenschaftskolleg (science collegium). This also includes the creation of a German-Chinese platform for innovation, for the establishment of which experts from both countries met in Beijing in September last year. A follow-up conference is scheduled to take place in Berlin on 26 and 27 November 2012. The cooperation as regards the German-Chinese life sciences innovation platform likewise has made progress; first expert workshops have taken place. The experts from the

Helmholtz Association who were invited to the consultations included Prof. Dr Andreas Lendlein, Head of the Teltow-based Institute of Polymer Research at the Helmholtz Centre Geesthacht - Centre for Materials and Coastal Research and Vice Director of the Berlin-Brandenburg Center for Regenerative Therapies, and Prof. Dr Rolf Müller, Director of the Helmholtz Institute for Pharmaceutical Research Saarland. Lendlein has already founded a German-Chinese laboratory at Tianjin University, which receives support from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and from the MoST. Together with his cooperation partners in China, Müller is going to likewise establish a joint laboratory.

Sources: Beijing Office/Dr He Hong and BMBF press releases  
[www.bmbf.de/de/818.php](http://www.bmbf.de/de/818.php)

## News from the Brussels Office:

### EERA: New People at the Top

The "European Energy Research Alliance" (EERA) has a new chairman. Since September 2012, Erkki KM Leppävuori from Finland (President and CEO of the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland) heads the EERA Executive Committee (ExCO), which is responsible for supervising the research alliance. The aim of EERA is to improve cooperation as regards energy research across Europe and thereby to promote the development of efficient technologies. The Helmholtz Association is presently represented in the ExCo by executive board member

Prof. Ulrich Wagner (DLR) and is the coordinating body of three EERA Joint Programmes. The EERA office is coordinated by Helmholtz in Brussels. In addition to receiving other funds, it is co-financed by an EU project.

Further information:  
[www.eera-set.eu](http://www.eera-set.eu)

### ERC Advice at Brussels Office

Scientists currently can submit their funding applications to the European Research Council (ERC). This is the final call for applications within the seventh EU framework programme for research (FP7).

The Brussels Office supports applicants from within the Helmholtz Association during the entire application process, for example, by assessing the application and advisory services. Since 2011, the office additionally provides individualised interview training. This prepares candidates in the programme field "Starting Grants" for the selection interviews in Brussels in a targeted manner. In order to be able to adapt even better to (potential) applicants, the Brussels Office and the centres have recently launched an ERC experience exchange for multipliers. Positive outlook: The ERC line of funding is not only to be continued in the next EU framework programme for research "Horizon 2020", but it is to be allocated significantly increased funds.

The first point of contact as regards ERC questions at the Brussels Office:



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Deadlines for ERC applications:

- Starting Grants: until 17 October 2012
- Advanced Grants: until 22 November 2012
- Consolidator Grants: 07 November 2012 - 21 February 2013
- Synergy Grants: 10 October 2012 - 10 January 2013