

Funding guidelines for the Helmholtz Doctoral Award 2024 - Track B

Overview of frequently asked questions:

How is the phrase "Doctoral candidates [...] have completed their doctorate at a Helmholtz Center [...] in the past 14 months [...]" to be understood?

This means that the doctorate must not have been completed more than 14 months before the deadline for submitting the application to the Helmholtz head office. The date of the defense is decisive. For example: The deadline for submitting the application is February 1, 2025. The award winner defended their dissertation between November 30, 2024 and January 31, 2025 and thus meets the application requirements.

How should the phrase "doctoral candidates [...] are b) about to complete their doctorate" be understood?

This means that the doctorate does not yet have to be completed, but the submission of the doctoral thesis is planned within one year of the nomination deadline. The last work plan discussed with the Thesis Advisory Committee is decisive for this.

For example: The deadline for submitting the application is February 1, 2025. The work plan indicates that the doctorate should be submitted by January 31, 2025 - the application requirements have been met.

What happens if the doctoral candidate does not have a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC)?

The Helmholtz doctoral guidelines stipulate that doctoral candidates are supported by a doctoral committee, including annual meetings in which the doctoral candidate's work plan is discussed. A comparable structure can also support the doctorate. If no comparable committee exists or if there is no written work plan agreed with the TAC from which the requested date can be derived, the supervisor can also confirm the planned submission date in writing.

What should be submitted to the Helmholtz head office for assessment if the doctorate has not yet been completed?

For candidates who have not yet completed their doctorate, the Helmholtz head office (transfer and innovation department) will receive the exposé to be submitted for nomination. Furthermore, it is up to the candidates (doctorate completed or not yet completed) to decide which (further) information is made available to the transfer office in order to assess the application potential of the research or research project carried out in the doctorate.

What exactly does the additional funding option of the Field Study Fellowship entail?

The Field Study Fellowship enables each of the award winners to conduct **a market survey** with an **additional funding budget (up to 23,000 euros over 3 months)** in order to better understand customer needs through interviews and market research. The budget is to be used exclusively for personnel and material costs for market research. Funding is available for one to a maximum of two

people, whereby the time commitment can vary from at least 50% part-time to 100% full-time. Only one person can be funded full-time.

In **addition**, the program includes **mentoring geared towards market exploration, which** can be taken advantage of **to the tune of up to 5,500 euros**.

During what period should the Field Study Fellowship be taken up?

The fellowship can be structured flexibly by the award winner, but must be notified to the Helmholtz head office by **December 1, 2025** at the latest and must be started **within one year** of the announcement of the award.

Can the Field Study Fellowship also be claimed if the awardee is no longer employed at a Helmholtz Association center but at another scientific institution in Germany or abroad?

No. The Field Study Fellowship funding and mentoring can only be claimed if an employment relationship with the Helmholtz Center that submitted the application exists for the entire funding period.

To whom must the awardee report the planned Field Study Fellowship?

Firstly, vis-à-vis the Helmholtz Center, as the grant agreement must be contractually regulated, implemented and settled via this institution. On the other hand, the Helmholtz head office must be notified of the use of the fellowship **by December 1, 2025 at the latest**. For coordination, please contact the contact the Helmholtz transfer and innovation department (see [here](#)) or Henri Marschall, impulsfonds@helmholtz.de).

How does the awardee apply for the Field Study Fellowship?

In order to carry out and finance the fellowship from the Initiative and Networking Fund, a rough cost plan must be submitted for the use of the personnel and material resources required for the market exploration. A separate application form is available on request from the Helmholtz Office ([Transfer & Innovation Division](#)). On this basis, a grant agreement will be concluded between the Helmholtz head office and the Helmholtz Center, the implementation of which must be documented in the form of a final report and an explainer video.

What personnel and material costs can be financed through the Field Study Fellowship?

Personnel costs: These are based on the pay scale classification of the persons involved. The calculation of personnel costs should be based on the current values of the TVöD. All ancillary personnel costs are included in the cost estimates. Additional costs (e.g. overheads, non-person-specific costs) are not eligible for funding. For the calculation of personnel costs, please contact the responsible third-party funding or personnel department (e.g. Grant Office) at your center.

Material costs: All material and travel costs required to carry out the market survey are eligible for funding; however, overhead costs are not.