

Annex 2

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- *What if I do not fulfill the eligibility criteria (2-6 years after receiving a doctorate, substantial international research experience)?*

Candidates who do not fulfill these requirements are advised not to apply (the cutoff date is the deadline for submission of complete applications by the Helmholtz Centers to the Helmholtz Head Office in Bonn). If a Helmholtz Center would like to submit an application for such an individual, a written statement including meaningful justification must be submitted to the Helmholtz Head Office before the application deadline. Funding will only be provided in particularly well-justified cases.

The Helmholtz Young Investigator Group program is primarily a recruiting instrument. Candidates who are already employed at a Helmholtz Center can be nominated, but they must demonstrate international experience, competitiveness, and mobility to a special degree. Researchers who have been employed at a Helmholtz Center for some time are not the primary target group of the program.

- *Does evidence have to be provided for child-rearing periods?*

It is sufficient to note the doctorate date and the children's dates of birth on the CV and on the cover sheet (see Annex 6). Child-rearing periods within the period in question are recognized at two years for each child under the age of 12.

- *What academic certificates should I submit?*

All academic certificates except for your Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate should be submitted.

- *Is a general confirmation by the Center sufficient, or is an additional supporting letter from the Young Investigator Group's intended host institute necessary?*

A letter of support from the direct superior is required; as a rule, this should be the head of the institute.

- *What are the requirements for the written statement by the university/department?*

The letter from the university should be signed by high-ranking officials (President, Vice-Chancellor, and Dean, including official stamp). All the points listed in "Fact sheet for Universities" (Annex 5) should be observed. A sample university statement can be found in Appendix 8.

- *Is cooperation with international partners allowed?*

As a rule, such cooperation is allowed. However, funding can neither be used for personnel costs nor for investments at institutions abroad.

- *Are new group leaders obliged to participate in the Helmholtz Leadership Academy's "Leading your Group" course?*

Yes, participation within the first two years of their funding period is mandatory. This course was designed especially for new Helmholtz Association Young Investigator Group leaders. The curriculum ideally prepares participants for their new leadership responsibilities and supports them in successfully developing their own group. The course is offered in German and in English on an alternating schedule. Further information is available at www.helmholtz.de/academy.

The course fees of about €5,200 can be factored into the application's financial plan and covered either wholly or in part by the Centers.

- *What are the selection criteria?*

- Excellent candidate quality: curriculum vitae, publications, citation index, awards and more

- Excellence of the planned research project: innovation capacity, relevance; structure, coherence, and feasibility
 - Strategic importance for the nominating institution (the host Helmholtz Center) and clearly discernible synergy effects resulting from the cooperation between the center and the partner university.
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- *Are there set selection quotas for individual Centers or research fields?*

Each Helmholtz Center can nominate a certain number of candidates (See Call “E. Application”). In the subsequent selection procedure, the best candidates and projects are selected according to the above-mentioned criteria, irrespective of their ties to topics or Centers.
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- *When can I expect an invitation to a selection interview?*

If you are successful in passing the written stage of selection, you will be invited to present your proposal at the selection meeting. Your hosting Helmholtz Center will be informed with about four weeks’ notice. We will provide the invited candidates with a briefing shortly thereafter.
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- *When is the final decision made?*

Your hosting Helmholtz Center will be informed of the funding decision no more than two days after the selection meeting. The successful candidates will be notified by the Helmholtz Centers shortly thereafter.