

Annex 3

Fact Sheet for Universities

The Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups program

The Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups program provides the opportunity to set up and lead a research group for excellent young scientists from Germany and abroad. The program aims to foster the early scientific independence of researchers and offers excellent working conditions in a research-intensive environment while offering attractive and permanent career prospects based on proven scientific achievements. Since the start of the program in 2003, more than 253 recipients have been awarded funding for their research group at a Helmholtz Center.

Universities as important strategic partners

The Helmholtz Association's most important strategic partners are universities. Close cooperation with them plays a key role in the Helmholtz Young Investigator Group program. This cooperation allows group leaders to experience the benefits of a collaborative culture based on the division of labor when striving to achieve a common goal at an early stage of their career. At the same time, they have the opportunity to gain teaching experience and qualify for a professorship. The President of the Helmholtz Association supports all efforts to jointly appoint the selected Helmholtz Young Investigator Group leaders to professorships at the partner universities.

A Helmholtz Young Investigator Group may be based at a university, a Helmholtz Center, or both. However, the group is expected to agree on clearly defined tasks at each of the institutions. These tasks must be set out in detail in the planned work schedule.

As important partners, the universities are included in the selection process from the very beginning. The Helmholtz Centers confer with the universities when nominating candidates. These nominations are forwarded to the Helmholtz Head Office in Bonn for the final selection round. This means that the universities and Helmholtz Centers jointly decide which candidates are suited to setting up a successful Helmholtz Young Investigator Group. To strengthen cooperation in young talent promotion, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the Helmholtz Association published a joint white paper in 2004. It identified the Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups as being particularly well suited to promoting scientific excellence and to enhancing the reputation of both partner institutions. The points set out in the white paper on the Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups form the basis for the statement submitted with each application.

Selection procedure quality assurance

In 2007, the Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups program was thoroughly evaluated by iFQ, the Institute for Research Information and Quality Assurance (see iFQ Working Paper No. 6, December 2009, *Postdocs in Germany: A comparative study of the Young Investigator Groups program*). The study confirmed that the selection process is comparable to the processes used by other programs (the Emmy Noether Program of the German Research Foundation (DFG), for example) in terms of quality and transparency standards.

The first call for applications to the Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups program was issued in 2003 and has since established itself as a highly competitive procedure. The applications are assessed in a multi-stage selection process that meets the highest quality standards. In the first stage, the Helmholtz Centers and the universities jointly perform a pre-selection. The nominated candidates' applications are then forwarded to the Helmholtz Head Office in Bonn. Here, at least two appraisals by national or international experts are commissioned to evaluate each application. Based on these assessments, up to 25

candidates are invited to the Helmholtz Head Office in Berlin to present their projects to an interdisciplinary panel.

[The application – required university statement](#)

The complete application should include a written statement by the university board and the department covering the following points:

- rights and responsibilities (staff and budget responsibilities, doctoral candidate supervision, teaching responsibilities a maximum of four hours per semester week, access to all necessary resources/infrastructure), following the higher education laws applicable in the relevant federal state;
- planned joint appointment to a professorship;
- career prospects should the Young Investigator Group leader wish to continue his or her career at the university after the funding period ends.

The form for the university statement on the rights and responsibilities of a Young Investigator Group leader is provided below. This statement is to be submitted to the Helmholtz Head Office in Bonn **by August 26, 2022**, at the latest.

University statement

_____ (university) and the _____ department expressly welcome the application of _____ (group leader name) for a leadership position in a Helmholtz Young Investigator Group bearing the title of _____ at _____ (institute/facility at which the group is to be based).

In order to grant _____ (group leader name) scientific independence early on and to provide the opportunity to gain the relevant qualifications for an academic career, this university and department declare the following:

• A (junior) professorship is planned	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
• As a Young Investigator Group leader, he/she will be integrated into research and teaching activities at the university. By mutual agreement, the group leader will be entrusted with teaching responsibilities of not more than four weekly teaching hours per semester.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
• Neither the university nor the department will issue official instructions that influence the group leader's independent work on the specified research project.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
• The group leader will be given responsibility for the Young Investigator Group personnel and budget and the authority to supervise doctoral candidates in completing their doctorates.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
• The Helmholtz Young Investigator Group will have access to all necessary resources (specify if necessary) and will be able to use the infrastructure of the university (specify below if necessary) and the department. Specifications: _____ _____ _____	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

University representative signature with official stamp and date

Helmholtz Young Investigator Group leader signature and date

Department representative signature