



Helmholtz Young Investigators Groups Programme Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- *What if I do not fulfill the eligibility criteria (2 - max. 6 years after receiving doctorate, at least six months abroad)?*
Applicants who do not fulfill these requirements are advised not to apply. In case a Helmholtz Centre would like to promote a candidate who does not meet all the criteria a written statement including reasons for promoting this candidate has to be submitted to the Helmholtz Head Office before the deadline in June 2016. Funding is only possible in well-justified cases.
- *Does evidence have to be given for child-rearing periods?*
It is sufficient for these periods to be noted in the CV.
- *What academic certificates should I submit?*
Academic certificates do not have to be submitted.
- *Will a new call for the programme be published next year?*
Usually there is an annually call. We plan to publish a call for the programme in 2017.
- *Is a general confirmation of the Centre sufficient or is an additional supporting letter from the host institute necessary?*
A letter of support from the direct superior (as a rule, the head of the institute) is indeed required.
- *What are the requirements for the written statement by the university and faculty for the Helmholtz-Young Investigators Groups?*
The letter from the university should be signed by a high-ranking official (President or Vice-Chancellor and Dean, including official stamp). All the points listed in the „Information for Applicants“ should be taken into account. A sample declaration can be found in [Appendix 5](#).
- *What is a milestone?*
A milestone is a decision-making stage between two phases of the project, when the results achieved so far are evaluated and the go-ahead for the next phase is given.
- *Can international partners get involved?*
Yes, international partners can get involved.
However, funding cannot be used for personnel costs or investments at institutions abroad. This does not apply to costs that arise when the leader of a Young Investigators Group is abroad as a guest. In special cases, funds can be passed on to partners abroad to cover material expenses and to hold events abroad as long as these costs can be shown to be directly related to the activities of the Helmholtz Young Investigators Group.
Helmholtz Young Investigators Groups cannot be established abroad.

- *Are the new group leaders obliged to participate in the course “Leading your group” offered by the Helmholtz Management Academy?*
Yes, participation is intended for all new leaders of Helmholtz Young Investigators Groups to follow within the first two years of their funding period. This course was designed especially for the new group leaders. The course gives participants the ideal preparation for their new leadership responsibilities and supports them in successfully setting up their own group. The total fees for the course comprising four modules amount to €7,600 (as of 16 March 2015), including accommodation and board at Liebenberg Manor, just outside Berlin. Half of the fees will be paid by the Initiative and Networking Fund; this does not need to be included in the financial plan. Some Helmholtz Centres subsidise fees for Helmholtz Management Academy courses. Click on the following link for further information: www.helmholtz.de/akademie.
- *How does the selection procedure work?*
The selection procedure takes place in three steps:
In a first step, there is a pre-selection of the applications in the Helmholtz-Centre. The pre-selection procedure is the responsibility of the respective Centre board. Centres can nominate up to six candidates.
In a second step the applications formally examined by the Helmholtz Head Office are passed on for expert evaluation to at least two experienced, independent scientists, who are themselves actively engaged in the research field in question or are intimately familiar with the particular subject (written evaluation).
Based on the recommendations of the reviewers, the candidates with very good evaluations – normally around 30 – are invited to an interview with an interdisciplinary reviewer panel chaired by the President of the Helmholtz Association. **In the third step** this panel selects the group leaders to receive funding.
- *What criteria are used in the selection procedure?*
 - Excellence of the proposed programme: degree of innovation, relevance; structure and feasibility
 - Quality of the candidate: including CV, publications, citation index, academic distinctions etc.
 - Formal quality of the application
 - Clearly discernible synergy effects from the collaboration between the Centre and the university partner.
- *Are there set selection quotas for the individual Centres or research fields?*
No, the candidates will compete for selection and the best chosen, independent of topic or Centre.
- *When can I expect an invitation to a selection interview?*
The selection meeting will take place from 4-5 October 2016. If you are successful in passing the written stage of selection, you will be invited to give your presentation at the selection meeting with approx. four weeks’ notice.
- *When is the final decision made?*
Directly after the selection meeting; you will be informed on 7th October 2016 at the latest.