

**Call for Proposals, 3 September 2018**

## **6 Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups**

**Jointly supported with funding from**

**The Initiative and Networking Fund of the Helmholtz Association**

**and**

**The Russian Science Foundation**

In order to increase the scientific cooperation between Helmholtz Research Centers and Russian research institutions, the **Helmholtz Association** and the **Russian Science Foundation** announce the opening of the third call for applications for Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups. At the Russian Science Foundation the proposals will be part of an open public competition for the activity “**Basic Scientific Research and Exploratory Scientific Research, Conducted by International Research Teams**”.

The aim of this joint funding program is to identify mutual scientific interests between researchers of the Helmholtz Research Centers and Russian research institutions and universities. A special focus of this program lies in the support and encouragement of early stage researchers in both countries to pursue a career in science and establish new international links and exchange of knowledge on the basis of excellent research projects.

The third call for Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups is open for applications in the two research areas “**Materials and Emerging Technologies**” and “**Structure and Dynamics of Matter**” with a deadline of **30 November 2018**. After a review period of approximately five months, up to six Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups will be selected for funding.

### **Aim of the funding measure**

The Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups are designed to intensify the scientific cooperation between the Helmholtz Research Centers and Russian scientific institutions and universities in order to set new impulses in existing and upcoming research programs of the Helmholtz Association, more specifically in the research areas “**Materials and Emerging Technologies**” and “**Structure and Dynamics of Matter**” with respect to the third call. A special focus of the Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups lies in the promotion of excellent young Russian and German/ Helmholtz scientists, especially PhD-students, and in their involvement in the international research projects and infrastructures steered by the research centers of the Helmholtz Association.

A Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Group should establish the basis for a future larger-scale bilateral or EU-Russia funded project. German universities are welcome to participate in the application and formation of a Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Group together with a team from one of the Helmholtz Research Centers.

### Subject of funding

- Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups shall bring together research capacities from one or more Russian research institution or university and one or more Helmholtz Research Center and German university, thus creating a **center of excellence** with international standing and attractiveness to researchers in a key area of research (“**Materials and Emerging Technologies**” and “**Structure and Dynamics of Matter**”). In general, researchers of both countries should contribute equally to the competence of the partnership. In the partnership, researchers of the participating partner institutions work on a defined research project which is divided into **coordinated work packages** designed to reach a common research goal.
- Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups provide **sufficient expertise, equipment and manpower capabilities** to work on the defined research project, fill relevant research gaps and develop a special concept for cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional support of young scientists.
- Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups shall represent research groups of **high national and international visibility** which have the potential to attract additional funding from third parties throughout their funding period.
- Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups shall be **managed jointly** by a German and a Russian Principal Investigator (PIs), responsible for the harmonization and coordination of work packages within the group. One of the PIs shall be announced as the spokesperson responsible for the joint external representation of the project.
- The results of the research shall be disseminated by the participating German and Russian researchers. It is recommended that all Helmholtz and Russian institutions involved in the HRJRG develop and sign a separate agreement on issues such as **intellectual property rights**, liability and confidentiality.

### Scope of funding

- The Helmholtz Association will provide each selected Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Group with funding of up to **130,000 Euros** per year from its Initiative and Networking Fund, for a total period of three years. The part of the budget provided by Helmholtz can only be used for one or more of the following cost categories:
  - to cover the travel and accommodation costs for involved researchers;
  - to cover personnel costs for the Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Group;
  - to purchase equipment and consumables necessary for the performance of the Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Group;
  - to cover the costs for joint field work or expeditions within the framework of the Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups.

These shares of the funds, however, are generally required to be spent in Germany and cannot be transferred abroad.

- RSF will provide the Russian participants of the Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups with **4 to 6 million Russian rubles** per year and per group for a total of three years.

The RSF funding follows the regulations for the programs for „Basic Scientific Research and Exploratory Scientific Research, Conducted by International Research Teams”.

### Conditions for funding

- At RSF, the proposals will be part of an open public competition for the activity “Basic Scientific Research and Exploratory Scientific Research, Conducted by International Research Teams”.
- For each Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Group a **joint proposal** in **English language** has to be **submitted through the Executive Board of the coordinating Helmholtz Research Center** (see also below, “submission of applications”).
- Helmholtz Research Centers may submit a **maximum of four applications in total**.
- The proposals must name **German and Russian PIs** of the project. German and Russian PIs must be scientists of **outstanding reputation**.
- Participating groups that are not affiliated with the same institutions as the Russian PI and the Helmholtz PI should have a **Group Leader**. Constraints for selection of a Group Leader are equal to constraints of the Russian PI (as stated above).
- The joint proposal should contain a clear concept for the integration of **PhD students** into the research activities on both sides.
  
- Projects supported by the grants provided by the Parties shall not seek funding for the topics dealt with from other sources for the entire period of implementation in order to exclude double funding.
  
- The annual amount of funding for each project may be altered in accordance with the results of the review of the submitted reports concerning the implementation of the projects and proper use of grants by their recipients, or in accordance with the changes in the budget of either Party.
  
- The proposals must meet the following conditions:
  - **originality** of the proposed research and **international standing** of the participating groups from both countries
  - **strategically relevant** research topic
  - **significance** for the advancement of **basic research**
  - **program-oriented** activities with coordinated complementary **work packages**, concrete goals and sufficiently detailed **milestones**
  - **significant added value** for all partners as a result of the collaboration
  - **external evidence** of the high expertise of the research groups indicated through, e.g., Helmholtz evaluations, prizes, leadership or participation in outstanding EU or third party-funded projects, calls to high-ranking expert committees, high quality publications
  - **specific quality gain** for the partner institutions involved
  - **sufficient level of skill, equipment and manpower capabilities** to conduct the research in a timely, responsible and diligent manner
  - **joint management** and leadership structure with joint external representation and spokesperson
  - special concept for the inclusion of **PhD students** in the research activities on both sides
  - sufficient opportunities for the **exchange of young scientists** to/from Russia/Germany must be outlined

- **financial master plan** regarding the utilization of funds requested from Helmholtz and RSF (**3-year financial plan** giving **annual specifications** of the categories of costs for each of the participating partner institutions respectively: personnel, consumables and equipment).

### Submission of applications

- Complete applications must be submitted in **three separate pdf-files** (application, cover letter, reviewer recommendations) **by 30 November 2018 at the latest** to [alexandra.rosenbach@helmholtz.de](mailto:alexandra.rosenbach@helmholtz.de). In addition, one **hardcopy** must arrive at the Head Office of the Helmholtz Association in Bonn (Ahrstraße 45, 53175 Bonn, Germany) by 30 November 2018 at the latest.
- Applications must be **submitted via the Executive Board of the coordinating Helmholtz Center**.
- Applications should be related to one (or both) of the topics: “**Materials and Emerging Technologies**” or “**Structure and Dynamics of Matter**”
- Each Helmholtz Center may submit a **maximum of four applications** in total.
- Applications must be submitted using the “**Joint Project Description Template**”-Form designed for the application process for Helmholtz-RSF Joint Research Groups (disqualifying criterion).
- Applications must be written in **English**.
- Up to **six independent reviewers** for the proposal must be suggested including full contact details. It must be declared that there are no conflicts of interest. Reviewers located at a Helmholtz Center may not be named.
- Applications must **fulfill all the formal conditions** for funding in order to be admitted to the evaluation procedure (amendments are not possible).
- The **Russian partners** must submit their application to the Russian Science Foundation (RSF) through a **parallel procedure**. Please refer to the website of RSF for further information.