

## Annex 1

### Application Guidelines for Helmholtz Centers and Candidates

#### Eligibility requirements

Scientists who fulfill the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- **Two to max. six years after receiving doctorate.** The cutoff date is the deadline for submission of complete applications by the Helmholtz Centers to the Helmholtz Head Office in Bonn. Parental leave periods in this phase will be taken into consideration at two years per child under 12. The doctorate date and the dates of birth of any children must be indicated on the CV. Exceptions may be made only in special cases (for example, if the six-year limit is exceeded due to the special requirements of a physician's clinical career, or in the case of particularly excellent research achievements immediately after receiving the doctorate).
- **International research experience.** This can be documented by a minimum six-month continuous research stay abroad, coordination of a major international research project, or significant involvement in a major international research cooperation. Exceptions can be made for outstanding researchers for whom international mobility may be restricted because of children.

Those who have already been appointed to a professorship at a German or foreign university at the time of application or who were funded by a comparable program are not eligible for application.

**Applications will only be considered if they are complete and fulfill all criteria listed above. If a Helmholtz Center would like to submit an application that does not meet all the criteria, a written statement including meaningful justification must be submitted to the Helmholtz Head Office before the application submission.**

**If an incomplete application or a list of biased reviewers (see Appendix 9) is submitted, the Head Office reserves the right to exclude the application from the subsequent selection process.**

#### Application and selection process

- Candidates must apply by the submission deadline, submitting a CV, list of publications, and a brief outline of the planned work program (letter of intent, no more than two pages) to the Helmholtz Center. **Candidates are encouraged to establish contact early on with the contact persons indicated for the relevant Helmholtz Center** (see Appendix 3).
- Each Helmholtz Center carries out a transparent pre-selection process. An account of this process must be included when applications are submitted (see Annex 10).
- The Helmholtz Center works with the selected candidates to prepare the **complete** application. Where a renewed application is being submitted, developments since the last application are to be described (see Appendix 6).
- The partner university should be involved in the selection process at an early stage in order to allow joint appointment and integrate the Young Investigators Group leaders into the departments

of cooperating universities (see Appendix 5). A sample form for university statements concerning the rights and duties of candidates can be found in Appendix 8.

- The applicant is the host Helmholtz Center. The complete applications<sup>1</sup> must be submitted to the Helmholtz Association via the EABS electronic application and review system (<https://helmholtznet.de/antraege/default.aspx>) by the stated deadline (cutoff date). Please submit the digital version of the application as four PDF-files (see the section entitled *Structure and requirements for the complete application*):
  - Center cover letter
  - Candidate cover letter
  - Assessable application
  - List of six independent reviewers

One hardcopy must also be sent to the Helmholtz Association Head Office (Ahrstrasse 45, 53175 Bonn, Germany).

- An overview of the selection procedure can be found in Appendix 4.

## Structure and requirements for the complete application

### Center cover letter (German or English, one PDF)<sup>2</sup>

1. Letter from the board
  - confirming partial funding by the center, possibly shared with a university. The funding provided by the Initiative and Networking Fund of the President of the Helmholtz Association will amount to up to 150,000 Euro a year and will serve as co-financing. The Helmholtz Center and cooperating university are expected to provide funding to at least an equivalent amount.
  - Confirmation of provision of the necessary facilities (including furnishings and IT) and infrastructure for the candidates and group members.
  - Agreement to pay the €4,000 in fees for the “Leading your group” course at the Helmholtz Management Academy either fully or in part.
  - Confirmation that the leader of the Young Investigators Group will have a fixed contact person (such as an experienced group leader) available to him/her during the initial stages, including the appointment of this person.
  - Confirmation that the Young Investigators Group leader will be given the opportunity to reflect on his/her own development and discuss further career prospects within a suitable framework at least once a year, and indication, who will take part in the talk.
2. Concept for personnel development measures and description of the planned evaluation process for possible training
  - The activities of Young Investigators Group leaders require complex competencies in various areas of activity such as research, teaching, management, and leadership. In order to optimally support Young Investigators Group leaders in this task, a personnel development concept must be drawn up for the candidate. It must address the following issues:

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<sup>1</sup>The university statement can be submitted later (see call “F. Dates and Deadlines”).

<sup>2</sup>If there are multiple application confirmations, please enclose a copy of each.

- Individual needs analysis taking into consideration the development levels of the individual, the team, and the organization as well as the professional, methodological, and social competence areas
    - Preparation of a concrete qualification plan, taking into account the needs analysis and specifying the formats of the continuing education offers (such as workshops, coaching, and mentoring)
    - Presentation of career options following positive interim evaluation.
    - Frequency and contact persons for regular opportunities to reflect on career and development planning. In particular, a personnel development talk must be scheduled in the context of the evaluation.
  - The procedure and criteria for the planned evaluation with a view to continuing the project must be explained to the candidate.
    - Please provide a brief description of the planned evaluation procedure.
    - Please submit relevant tenure policies with the documents.
3. Information about the Helmholtz Centers' internal pre-selection process (see Annex 10)

**Candidate cover letter (German or English, one PDF)**

- Declaration of current employment, including term of contract, and the submission of comparable applications to other organizations
  - Candidates cannot apply for the Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups if they are already receiving funding from a similar program (such as the German Research Foundation's (DFG) Emmy Noether Groups).

**Assessable application (in English, one PDF, no more than 3 MB)**

1. Application overview (see Annex 6)
2. Scientific portion of the application
  - No more than 20 pages (exclusion criterion) in English;
  - Presentation of clearly recognizable work packages, important intermediate steps, and milestones with a timetable;
  - Presentation of the planned cooperation and communication structures.
3. Strategic significance of the Young Investigators Group for the Helmholtz Center and the involved partners
  - Statement on the connection to the Helmholtz program and to the focus of the (prospective) partner university/department; the benefit for both institutions should be presented in detail
4. Candidate's CV
5. List of publications
6. Financial plan (see Annex 7)
  - Travel expenses can be included under material costs or expenditures.
  - No funding will be granted for overheads.
7. Supporting letter from the prospective direct superior (in English)

**List of six independent reviewers (in German or English, as a PDF)**

- The bias criteria (see Annex 9) must be observed. Specifically, reviewers who have an active role in a Helmholtz Center may not be named.

- The **proposals with complete contact and address data** (including e-mail addresses) should be attached to the application on a separate sheet and signed to confirm that no potential bias is known (if applicable, disclose possible contact points).

#### **University statement (in German or English, as a PDF) (see Annex 5 and 8)**

- Statement of rights and responsibilities (staff and budget responsibilities, doctoral candidate supervision, teaching responsibilities not exceeding four hours per semester week, access to all necessary resources/infrastructure), in accordance with the higher education laws applicable in the relevant federal state;
- regarding a joint appointment to a professorship;
- regarding career prospects should the Young Investigators Group leader wish to continue his or her career at the university after the funding period ends.
- A sample university statement is provided in Appendix 8.

## Funding phase

### **Funding**

Funding is provided on the basis of a grant agreement between the Helmholtz Association and the applying Helmholtz Center.

### **Evaluation of the Young Investigators Group**

After three to four years, the Centers conduct an evaluation of the Young Investigators Group – in consultation with the partner university, if applicable. The evaluation results will be the basis for decisions as to whether the employment contract will be made permanent and on the group leader's future career.

During the course of the evaluation, the Center must meet with the Young Investigators Group leader to discuss his/her career. The meeting must be documented and is to be scheduled in the concept for personnel development measures (see above).

The evaluation report and a statement of the Helmholtz Center whether the employment contract will be made permanent must be submitted to the head office.

The Initiative and Networking Fund cannot release the funds for the fifth and sixth years until the evaluation report has been submitted with a corresponding statement from the Helmholtz Center.

### **Additional support during any family phase:**

During a family phase, group leaders who take parental leave or work part-time can apply for additional funding from the Initiative and Networking Fund for a temporary deputy leader (postdoc according to the DFG rate) to supervise the group (to the extent possible), allowing seamless continuation of the research project.

### **Open science publication**

By accepting funding from the Initiative and Networking Fund of the Helmholtz Association, scientists agree to make scientific publications based either entirely or in part on results of the funded project available to everyone in a freely accessible archive (repository) no later than six months after the original publication. If good reasons are presented, open science publication may be waived. These reasons must be reported to the Helmholtz Association as soon as they come to light.