

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.** 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 and on the cover sheet of the application (see Annex 6). 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 during the doctoral or postdoctoral studies. Exceptions can be made for outstanding researchers for whom international mobility may be restricted due to special circumstances (for example because of children). Candidates already employed by a Helmholtz Center are eligible but have to demonstrate international experience, competitiveness and mobility to a special degree.

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, the nominating Helmholtz Center must submit a written statement including meaningful justification to the Helmholtz Head Office before the application is submitted.

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 an application is being resubmitted, 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 Investigator 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 applications¹ 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
 - Declaration by the candidate
 - 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)²

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 €5,200 in fees for the “Leading your group” course at the Helmholtz Leadership Academy either fully or in part.
 - Confirmation that the leader of the Young Investigator 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 Investigator 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 career development measures and description of the planned evaluation process for possible training
 - The activities of Young Investigator Group leaders require complex competencies in various areas of activity such as research, teaching, management, and leadership. In order to optimally support Young Investigator Group leaders in this task, a career development concept must be drawn up for the candidate. It must address the following issues:

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

²If 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, including the offers made to the Young Investigator Group leader in case of a positive evaluation.
 - Frequency and contact persons for regular opportunities to reflect on career and development planning. In particular, a career 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).

Declaration by the Candidate (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).
- Agreement that the Helmholtz Association stores the information provided upon submission of the application and uses this data to process the application. In particular, this includes sending the application to external and internal reviewers.
- Agreement that the Helmholtz Association electronically stores and uses data provided upon submission of the application for purposes of review, statistics and evaluation.
- Agreement that the Helmholtz Association, in the event that the application is approved, publishes the name of the Young Investigator Group leader, the host Helmholtz Center and the title of the Helmholtz Young Investigator Group.
- Agreement that the Helmholtz Association, in the event that the application is approved, forwards the name of the Young Investigator Group leader and, if necessary, the CV and abstract provided in the application to the trainers of the "Leading your Group" course by the Helmholtz Leadership Academy.

The consent to the collection, processing and use of private data is voluntary and can be revoked at any time for the future. Revocations can be sent to info@helmholtz.de. In the event that the use of data is revoked, the data will be deleted or anonymized.

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 Investigator 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.
 - If the strategic significance is laid out specifically in the scientific portion of the application, a short reference to the relevant paragraphs is sufficient.
- 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.
 - The Helmholtz Association aims to offer doctoral researchers regular employment contracts, including social security contributions, even though granting fellowships shall remain possible in exceptional cases. As a norm, doctoral researchers who receive funding from the Initiative and Networking Fund of the President of the Helmholtz Association must be compensated according to the good standard in the scientific field. In general, this means at least 65 % of an E 13 TVöD position (collective agreement 13 for civil service employees).
- 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 Investigator 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 Investigator Group

After three to four years, the Centers conduct an evaluation of the Young Investigator 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 Investigator Group leader to discuss his/her career. The meeting must be documented and is to be scheduled in the concept for career 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.