HELMHOLTZ RESEARCH SCHOOLS

INTERESTED IN GETTING YOUR DOCTORATE WHILST GAINING TRANSFERABLE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS?

If so, our prestigious Helmholtz Research Schools might be what you are looking for. The Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres has 21 Research Schools in the fields of:

- ENERGY
- AERONAUTICS, SPACE AND TRANSPORT
- HEALTH
- EARTH AND ENVIRONMENT
- KEY TECHNOLOGIES
- MATTER

As part of its talent management strategy, the Association’s central President’s Strategic Fund provides grants to its 18 independent research centres to establish Helmholtz Research Schools. Helmholtz Research Schools have typically 24 doctoral candidates and have a narrower theme than the Helmholtz Graduate Schools (c. 200 doctoral candidates), which are also initially funded by the President’s Strategic Fund. This tighter focus creates a shared team purpose which produces a creative and rewarding learning environment. Research School members receive a high standard of doctoral education, mentoring, equality of access, international exposure and career development.

As a doctoral candidate at a Research School you have a supervisor at your Helmholtz research centre and at the university which will award your doctorate. Your training is designed to increase your scientific impact and acquisition of transferable skills (such as writing and publishing, presentation, and technology transfer) applicable in any working environment.

Helmholtz Research Schools support you to publish in respected journals, to attend conferences and to establish networks with global leaders, which may include research stays abroad. International contacts often become external mentors for members of Helmholtz Research Schools. Recent examples of international stays include work with professors at Princeton (USA), Baoding (China), Imperial College London (UK) and AMU Luminy (France).

English is the working language at our research centres. This helps international researchers integrate and helps build international networks and reputations.

APPLICATIONS

If you are interested in applying to study for your PhD at a Helmholtz Research School you should look at the website for the Research School you are interested in (see map). Each Research School runs its own recruitment. Generally, applicants should hold or expect a good MSc or equivalent degree and show the potential to become a professional scientist. Opportunities are not restricted to an ‘academic year’ and appear regularly.

WWW.HELMHOLTZ.DE/EARLY-CAREER-RESEARCHERS
Whilst completing my Master’s thesis in plant biology at the German Aerospace Center (DLR), a Helmholtz research centre, I applied for a PhD scholarship to develop my research into ‘space farming’, plant biology in weightless conditions. I was awarded the scholarship and joined the DLR’s Space Life Sciences Research School. I enjoyed the autonomy to pursue my ideas and find my own supervisors at the DLR and the university of Munster, which will award my doctorate.

The established scientific networks at the DLR made access to the infrastructure that I need for experimental work in weightless conditions easy. I have run experiments at the Bremen Drop Tower and at the Swedish Esrange Space Center in the arctic circle. The Space Life Sciences Helmholtz Research School has a structured doctoral programme which includes science writing and presentation and career development. I have received funding to attend conferences and make two research stays at Vienna University which developed my skills in mass spectroscopy.

My time as a PhD candidate at DLR has been very rewarding both scientifically and personally and I have been supported in my proposals to continue my research as a post-doctoral researcher in Vienna.