



Announcement of the 2022 Call for the Helmholtz – OCPC Postdoc-Program

In order to support outstanding Chinese postdoctoral talents and to strengthen the cooperation between Helmholtz Research Centers and their Chinese partner institutions, the Helmholtz Association and the Office of China Postdoc Council have signed an agreement to launch a joint postdoctoral exchange program in 2017. Both sides committed to the joint selection and co-funding of 30 outstanding young scholars annually to work as a postdoc in a Helmholtz Research Center for a two-year period. The program will initially run for five years.

Currently eight Helmholtz Research Centers participate officially in the Helmholtz-OCPC Postdoc program: DESY, FZJ, GFZ, GSI, HZB, HZI, HMGU and KIT. We are in the process of admitting additional Centers to the contract.

30 OCPC fellowships can be granted for 2022. Each participating Helmholtz Center shall forward their calls for Chinese postdoctoral applicants **no later than 28 February 2022**. All calls will be published simultaneously on the English and Chinese Helmholtz website and the OCPC-website at www.chinapostdoctor.org.cn.

General requirements

This program is open to talented young Chinese researchers who are currently either in the final phase of their PhD or doing their postdoc research (based in China, Germany or another third country, even within a Helmholtz research group at present). Applicants should have the **Chinese nationality** and should be generally **under the age of 35 years**. They should have obtained their PhD degree within the last five years. In principle, applicants should meet the requirements of the Chinese domestic postdoc stations, which are virtually acting as a Chinese host for taking care of the application and the future research stay at a Helmholtz Center. Applications featuring an existing collaboration between Chinese and German partner institutions may be considered favorably.

Status and obligations of fellowship-holders upon entering the program

The successful OCPC scholarship holders will be enrolled and registered through Chinese routine procedure as a postdoctoral fellow in the postdoc station by which they have been recommended for this fellowship. At the respective Helmholtz Center, they will be classified as postdoctoral fellow and will receive either a fellowship contract or a working contract, depending on the Center's policy.

During their two years of research at the hosting Helmholtz Center, they will remain under the virtual administration of the postdoc station where they can also claim their Chinese income from OCPC's grant monthly or bimonthly. After the two-year stay in Helmholtz has ended, the Helmholtz-OCPC fellowship holders shall formally close their two-year program on both sides. The Chinese postdoc stations will carry out an individual internal evaluation, the results of which will be shared with OCPC.



OCPC will award each chosen postdoc fellow a grant amounting to **300,000.00 RMB**, which will be forwarded to the individual postdoc stations. The postdoc stations will make a monthly or bimonthly transaction to the fellowship holder. This Chinese part of the funding is not tax-free in most cases. The hosting Helmholtz Center will grant the selected fellows an additional tax-free amount of **1500 Euros** per month as assistance.

The combined funding amounts should be spent on, e.g., living expenses and health insurance as well as for participation in, e.g., academic exchanges or relevant networking events in Germany.

The two-year co-funding period for each grantee will be calculated from the date of the arrival of the postdoctoral fellow in Germany. OCPC generally allows an extension of max. one year, but without funding from OCPC. Thus, the hosting Helmholtz research group must take over the full financial support of the fellow if an extension is desired and agreed upon.

Application procedure and announcement of the results

The applicants need to follow the official announcement from the Office of China Postdoc Council, prepare the required documents and fill in the application forms during the given time window. The time window set by OCPC for the application is **1 March to 30 April 2022**.

All application materials must be submitted both digitally to the OCPC online platform and in paper form to a certified supporting postdoc station. The postdoc stations will carry out an evaluation based on excellence and relevance and then recommend candidates to OCPC based on the results of this screening. Direct individual applications to OCPC will be rejected.

Once the postdoc stations have forwarded all officially approved application materials, OCPC will complete a formality recording and cross-check. After this, the application documents will be forwarded to the Helmholtz partners in Germany; the respective group leaders conduct their selection procedures, including candidate interviews. The decisions will be shared with the Helmholtz Head Office.

The final internal OCPC approval procedure takes a few weeks. The official announcement of the results will be officially published and communicated to the German partners in July 2022. It will also be published on the official online portal of OCPC at <http://www.chinapostdoctor.org.cn>.

Next steps after the selection

The Helmholtz Head Office receives a confirmation letter from OCPC with the names of the approved fellows. All fellows need to contact OCPC in order to obtain an official certificate, confirming the fellowship both in Chinese and in English. They must contact their German supervisors and ask the responsible program coordinator in the respective Helmholtz Center to arrange all necessary documents, such as a formal invitation and a work or fellowship contract, for the visa procedure. All fellows should personally register themselves at the respective domestic postdoc station before they start their program in Germany.



The postdoctoral fellows enrolled in this program will undergo an internal evaluation within six months of their arrival at the respective hosting Helmholtz Center. In case the evaluation results are negative or in case a serious dispute between the postdoctoral fellow and his/her supervisor occurs, the postdoc fellow or the supervisor has the right to ask the Helmholtz Center/OCPC to terminate the proposed research project in writing.

Steps after the successful completion of the program

After the postdoctoral fellow has successfully completed the proposed research in two years, they shall generally close their case with the managing domestic postdoc station in time. It is possible to extend their stay at the same Helmholtz research group for a maximum of one year, but only under the precondition that the respective group financially fully supports the continuation of the stay in the Helmholtz Center.

Once they have completed their two-year program in Germany and closed their case at the responsible Chinese postdoc station, the postdoctoral fellows are free to move to whichever country they wish to pursue their future career; there are no further compulsory requirements.

For more information, please contact the liaison offices of Helmholtz and OCPC:

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