

Guidelines for the Joachim Herz Award



Alternating annually between natural sciences and economics, the Joachim Herz Award will honour outstanding young researchers who have the potential to carry out cutting-edge research that also meets international standards. The intention is that the Award will enable them to build on their socially relevant interdisciplinary research or drive the transfer of this research. The Award will be presented in the field of economics for the first time in 2024, and in natural sciences for the first time in 2025.

1 Target group

The Award is aimed at young researchers carrying out interdisciplinary work and whose doctorate is generally no more than six years ago at the time of the deadline for entries. This period will be extended accordingly in the event of time out (e.g. illness, caring for relatives, etc.) demonstrated by evidence. Childcare periods will be credited at a standard rate of two years per child for female researchers.¹

The main selection criterion is that candidates demonstrate outstanding potential in their field in line with international standards.

The target group comprises groups of researchers or individuals working at a university or other research institution (public sector organisations or private non-profit institutions) in Germany. Researchers from other European countries, who are not yet working at a research institution in Germany, may also apply. They must then have commenced their research work at a German research institution by the time of the Award being granted at the latest.

Groups of researchers are not disqualified if working on a cross-institutional or international basis. They must, however, specify which institution (based in Germany) is best suited to administering the grant for their joint research.

2 Call for submissions

The Award shall alternate annually between the fields of economics and natural sciences.

The Joachim Herz Foundation shall call for submissions for the Joachim Herz Award by sending emails to suitable institutions, for example, and via its social media channels and website.

The application and selection process shall be conducted by the Joachim Herz Foundation.

¹Male researchers will be credited with one year per child. If they submit proof of childcare periods of more than one year, this period may also be extended to up to two years per child for male researchers. The maximum extension of the eligibility period due to childcare periods is capped at six years.

3 Applications

Candidates apply for the Award themselves.

Applications may only be submitted digitally. The respective call for submissions will provide details of the application deadlines and how to access the application platform.

Any applications submitted after the deadline has passed will not be considered.

4 Selection of winners

The best research or transfer project will be selected by a panel of expert judges. The main selection criteria are the candidates' research excellence and the potential of their project outline.

The Joachim Herz Foundation will pick a judging panel comprising renowned academics who have made outstanding contributions in their field in accordance with international standards.

The best research or transfer project will be selected in a multistage process:

In the first stage of the selection process, all applications will be reviewed by the Joachim Herz Foundation from a formal standpoint. The judges will then consider which applications appear to merit the awarding of a grant. All applications that, in principle, merit the awarding of a grant will be assessed either externally or by the judges themselves. External assessments, carried out by experts not on the judging panel, may be requested in the event of conflicts of interest or if there is insufficient professional agreement on the judging panel and the judges wish to receive an outside opinion. Based on the (external) assessments, the judges will compile a shortlist of candidates; these candidates will then be invited to present their project to the judges in person. Other experts may be invited to the presentation at the request of the judges. Having heard the presentations of the shortlisted applications, the judges will meet to select the winning project.

The judges are under no obligation to provide candidates with reasons for their selection of the winner(s).

5 Prize money

The prize money stands at up to €500,000 and is granted for the specific purpose of realising the project outlined in the winning application.

Appropriation guidelines govern further usage options and set out detailed-rules (e.g. permissible expense categories) for the prize money.

Beyond this, the prizewinners themselves decide how to use the prize money for their research project.

6 Granting of the Award

The basis for payment of the prize money is a grant agreement between the Joachim Herz Foundation, the institution (public sector organisation or non-profit institution) at which the prizewinners are working and the prizewinners themselves. The prize money is paid out for the specified purpose to the institution at which the prizewinners are working. In the case of multiple prizewinners conducting research as a group, the prize money will only be paid out to more than one institution in exceptional cases.

The bestowal of the Award will be based on an award presentation letter. By accepting the Award, the winners and/or the institutions receiving the funds acknowledge the Award Guidelines and the terms of use of the grant.

7 Term

The funds may be used within a period of three years. This term begins with the first day of the period for which the funding is first requested as part of grant utilisation; this shall be no earlier than the calendar day immediately after the date on which the Award is presented, but no later than six months after the presentation of the Award.

8 Awards ceremony and accompanying conference

The Award shall be presented to the winners as part of a conference.

The conference shall be paid for by the Joachim Herz Foundation.

9 Miscellaneous

The Joachim Herz Foundation reserves the right to revoke the awarding of a grant and to assert its right to repayment if the application contained incorrect or incomplete information, if the conditions for the awarding of the grant have not been observed or if there is otherwise cause to revoke the grant. There is no entitlement to funding from the Joachim Herz Foundation.

Further, the Joachim Herz Foundation reserves the right to amend or supplement these Guidelines.