

Add-on Fellowships for Interdisciplinary Science and Transfer

Guidelines

The Joachim Herz Foundation awards up to 80 fellowships as part of the “Add-on Fellowships for Interdisciplinary Science and Transfer”. These fellowships provide personal support for researchers to promote interdisciplinary work at early career stages, gain deeper insights into adjacent disciplines, and enhance the transfer potential of their research. The fellowship includes funding that can be used for various purposes, such as research activities, conference participation, research stays, professional development, the acquisition of tools like hardware and software, and other measures that directly support research and transfer. In addition, fellows are encouraged to develop their own perspectives on translation and transfer within the framework of the fellowship. The Joachim Herz Foundation also regularly organizes networking events for fellows and alumni and actively encourages them to arrange their own events.

1 Target Group

The Add-on Fellowships are aimed at researchers in early and advanced career stages who work on research questions in the fields of economics or natural sciences and related interdisciplinary areas. The research topic should be connected to the theme of “Resources of the Future” within one of the following four core disciplines: business administration, economics, life science, and materials science. This may include high-risk approaches that, in alignment with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contribute to the efficient use of resources when applied. Additionally, the research topic must have transfer potential, although a clearly defined transfer objective is not a requirement.

Applications are open to doctoral candidates in the advanced stages of their dissertation, postdoctoral researchers, and temporary junior professors (without tenure or tenure track-option) from various disciplines who are integrated into the German academic system. Applicants should have a strong foundation in one of the four core disciplines mentioned above and the ability to publish in relevant academic journals within their field.

Transitions between different career stages, as well as from a temporary to a permanent position, are possible during the fellowship period. Additionally, fellows may move from an academic research institution in Germany to an academic research institution abroad at an advanced stage of the funding period. Applicants must have completed their doctorate (date of defense or an equivalent examination) no more than five years before the application deadline. For parents whose children were born within this five-years period and who can provide proof of parental leave, the eligibility period is extended to six years. The same extension applies to documented caregiving responsibilities within the family or in case the applicant has a health-related disability.

The fellowship does not cover living expenses. Applicants must secure their livelihood through employment at a university or research institution (either publicly funded or a private non-profit organization) in Germany or through another scholarship. It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure that the additional funding is permissible under the financial regulations of their primary funding source.

Researchers who have already secured a peer-reviewed research funding project as a principal investigator from organizations such as the DFG, BMFTR, EU, or a research-funding foundation are not eligible to apply for this fellowship program.¹

2 Fellowship Amount and Duration

The fellowship is awarded for a duration of two years and three months. It includes funding of up to EUR 15,000 for individual support and networking among fellows. These funds can be used for: equipment (e.g., computer, software), student assistants, data collection and acquisition, professional development and career coaching, conference fees, travel, and accommodation, and other expenses that directly support research, organization of academic conferences, development of transfer potential, science communication activities.

Successful applicants may receive up to EUR 3,000 in additional funding for equal opportunity measures aimed at making academic careers more family-friendly or addressing disability-related needs (based on DFG guidelines²). These funds can be used for: Travel and accommodation costs for caregivers accompanying the fellow during conferences or research stays, childcare expenses, either for a caregiver traveling with the fellow (e.g., a family member) or for childcare at the research location, costs for daycare, kindergarten, or similar childcare facilities. Support for fellows with chronic illnesses or disabilities (GdB >30 according to § 2 Abs. 1 SGB IX), such as the purchase of specialized hardware/software or travel expenses for accompanying persons. Medical treatment costs are not covered.

In exceptional cases, a cost-neutral extension of up to one additional year to use the allocated funds is possible. Each request for an extension is reviewed and approved by the Joachim Herz Foundation on a case-by-case basis.

3 Networking Meetings

In addition to individual support, regular meetings of the fellows facilitate and strengthen networking and communication among them, as well as across disciplines. Furthermore, meetings with changing focuses (e.g., science communication, research transfer, etc.) are offered. The networking meetings are a mandatory part of the fellowship program. Travel costs for the networking meetings are included in the funding amount.

¹ People who hold, for example, their „own position” or funding from the Emmy Noether Programme of the DFG, the Marie Skłodowska Curie-Fellowships of the EU, or comparable funding are not eligible to apply.

² DFG - German Research Foundation - Measures that Serve to Promote the Compatibility of Research and Family

4 Application Process

The fellowships are announced once a year. The announcement is primarily made digitally through mailings to suitable institutions. Detailed information about the application can be found on the Joachim Herz Foundation's website. Additionally, the fellowship announcement is published on relevant platforms. Interested individuals should apply directly to the Joachim Herz Foundation. The following documents must be submitted via the online form as part of the application:

- Application form with
 - a generally understandable description of the research with reference to "Resources of the Future" (max. 1,500 characters including spaces),
 - a description of the (planned) research project (max. 1,500 characters including spaces),
 - motivation (max. 1,000 characters including spaces),
 - as well as the applicant's own role in the project and, if applicable, that of the project team (max. 400 characters including spaces).

Note: The scientific innovation, relevance, feasibility, and necessity of the funding must be clearly stated. The motivation should highlight the personal added value or "add-on" provided by the funding. The individual contribution describes the active role the applicant will take in the project and how the team is structured, including their responsibilities in experiments/lab work, collaboration with mentors, and involvement in concept development.

- Description of the planned use of funds (max. 0.5 DIN A4 pages)
- CV, including a list of publications (only "accepted" and "revise and resubmit/revision" from "peer-reviewed" publications (max. 4 DIN A4 pages)
- Proof of academic qualifications (copies of the degree certificate / transcript of records and, if applicable, the doctoral certificate)
- Reference letter from the group leader / supervisor regarding the applicant's professional qualifications³ and suitability, the project's benefit to the research environment and potential application fields, and its potential for the applicant's further development (max. 2 A4 pages)

Note: A justification for why the necessary funding cannot be provided by the institution is desirable.

- Optional: Graphical abstract of the research project (max. 1 A4 page, portrait format)

The application documents must be submitted completely on time, and within the specified length limits. Exceeding the specified length may result in the application being rejected. The use of generative models for text and image creation must be transparently disclosed (see also DFG⁴). The deadlines for the annual call for applications will be announced on the Joachim

³ Junior professors should submit a statement from a professor of their choice if they are not assigned to a chair.

⁴ DFG - German Research Foundation - DFG Formulates Guidelines for Dealing with Generative Models for Text and Image Creation The applicant "must ensure that the use of generative models does not

Herz Foundation's website at the start of the call. The funding usually begins in November of the same year.

5 Selection Process

The selection is carried out through a two-stage written process: After preliminary review and formal examination of the applications by representatives of the Joachim Herz Foundation, the applications are forwarded to the jury for written evaluation. The jury consists of independent scientists as well as representatives of the Joachim Herz Foundation. The selection of up to 80 fellows, who are proposed for funding to the board of the Joachim Herz Foundation, takes place in a subsequent jury meeting. The selection criteria are:

- Scientific Excellence and Societal Relevance: A precise and convincing presentation of the research question along with a clear positioning of one's research vision in relation to societal relevance, particularly in the context of the "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs⁵). Clear suitability, added value, and alignment of the applicant with the funding program and its embedded objectives.
- Interdisciplinarity: A comprehensible justification for the interdisciplinary approach, as well as a plausible demonstration of the need for cross-disciplinary collaboration or knowledge of the applicant.
- Transfer Potential and Science Entrepreneurship: A realistic assessment of the potential of the applicant to transfer research findings into practice, along with concrete suggestions on how this could be implemented.
- Feasibility and Resource Planning: The project's realistic implementation in terms of time and finances. Meaningful, concrete, and transparent use of funds, also considering the available institutional resources.

In addition to these individual selection criteria, the selected fellows should represent different disciplines. There is no right to access or justification for the jury's decision.

6 Awarding of the Fellowship

Upon acceptance into the program, the fellows will sign a scholarship agreement with the Joachim Herz Foundation, which regulates, among other things, the use of the funding, reporting obligations, and submission deadlines. The fellow is required to immediately inform the Foundation of any changes that are relevant to the granting of the fellowship. The fellow is also required to submit a report at the end of the first funding year and a final written report after the funding period has ended.

infringe anyone else's intellectual property and does not result in scientific misconduct, for example in the form of plagiarism."

⁵ THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development particularly, Health and Well-being (3), Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (9), Sustainable Cities and Communities (11), as well as Climate Action (13).

7 Other

The Joachim Herz Foundation reserves the right to revoke a fellowship and assert a reimbursement claim if incorrect or incomplete information was given in the application, if the approval conditions were not observed, or if there are other important reasons for such a revocation. There is no entitlement on the part of the fellows to being funded by the Joachim Herz Foundation.

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

Hamburg, January 12, 2026