

Guidelines

Research Fellowships

I. Funding Instrument

Research fellowships are awarded for a specific and discrete research project abroad that will either be pursued individually or under the supervision of a qualified scientist or academic. Within this project the fellowship may also be used to prepare for a habilitation or an undertaking equivalent to a habilitation, to become familiar with a particular avenue of research or to learn specialised research methods.

DFG research fellowships serve to promote young researchers. As an exception, scientists and academics who do not fall into this category may receive funding to dedicate themselves to a research topic of particular importance.

For the duration of the fellowship, recipients should not be required to carry out any work which is not directly relevant to the objective of the fellowship.

Fellowships are intended to cover the costs of living of the recipient and may not be used to supplement grants from other funding organisations or income from employment.

Researchers with children are offered special funding options in conjunction with the fellowship to facilitate their stays abroad.

Part-time fellowships may only be applied for in special personal situations (e.g. disability, serious illness of a close relative or similar). In such cases, please contact the DFG Head Office.

II. Eligibility Requirements

As a scientist or academic, you are, in principle, eligible to apply for a research fellowship if you are integrated in the German science system. In general, you are considered to be integrated if you have worked uninterruptedly in a scientific capacity for at least three years during the doctoral and/or postdoctoral phase directly prior to submission of the proposal. If you are integrated in a foreign science system, you are not eligible to apply.

For proposals submitted from abroad, the eligibility requirements also stipulate that you must have completed the majority of your school and university education in Germany and have spent no more than three years in the same foreign country following completion of your doctorate; you must also declare that you intend to continue your career in science in Germany at the end of the fellowship.

Furthermore, you require confirmation from a researcher that he/she will provide you with the necessary working resources in his/her research facility for the duration of the project being applied for.

Applicants must have a doctorate to be eligible to apply for fellowship funding by the DFG.

Please note that you may also apply once your thesis has been submitted to the examination office. In this case, your application must include two copies of the thesis in paper form and one version on CD, as well as a statement from the person who supervised your thesis with regard to your chances of success. If approved, funding cannot be accepted until the entire doctoral process is completed and corresponding proof is received by the DFG.

Doctoral fellowships are only funded by the DFG within the Research Training Group programme.

III. Funding Duration

As a rule, research fellowships are granted for a minimum of three months up to a maximum of two years. Renewal proposals can only be funded in closely related exceptional cases and are permissible for a maximum of one year if subject-related reasons justify an extension. For further information, please contact the division responsible for your subject area.

Return grants are awarded for a maximum of six months and cannot be extended.

IV. Scope of Funding

1. Basic fellowship

The basic fellowship per month

up to 30 years of age	EUR 1,365
from 31 to 34 years of age	EUR 1,416
from 35 to 38 years of age	EUR 1,467
over 39 years of age	EUR 1,518

2. Allowance for direct project costs

In addition, a monthly allowance of EUR 103 is provided to cover direct project costs and travel expenses.

3. Foreign allowance

A foreign allowance is also paid, which increases if the fellow is accompanied by his or her spouse or life partner (in accordance with the German Registered Partnership Act) and/or children.

A list of countries with the minimum allowance as well as calculation examples for several countries can be found on the following DFG site:

<http://www.dfg.de/forschungsfoerderung/nachwuchsfoerderung/stipendien/auslandspauschalen.html>

4. Travel allowance

Reimbursements for stays abroad also include:

- round-trip travel (via the least expensive route);
- travel for the spouse/life-partner and/or children if they accompany the fellow at the fellowship location for longer than six months within the duration of the fellowship abroad.

5. Publication costs

An allowance towards expenses for the publication of the research findings made within the context of the fellowship can be applied for together with the fellowship proposal. A maximum of EUR 750 can be provided per year. The allowance may be used for any form of publication (not, however, for "grey literature"). If the most appropriate form of publication is in a specific book format and therefore high production costs are to be expected, you may apply for additional funding of up to EUR 5,000 per year. The request must be justified accordingly.

6. Additional project expenses

The DFG expects that all other expenses necessary for completion of the project be met by the host institute.

In addition, a co-sharing of maintenance costs by the host institute is desirable. Please include any possible commitments with the proposal.

7. Offsetting of independent income and third-party contributions

The following items will be offset against the fellowship: income from active employment (sections 13,15,18 and 19 of the German Income Tax Act [*Einkommensteuergesetz*, EstG]); interim payments after exiting public service; one-time contributions to assist with the cost of living and benefits with monetary value (e.g. free use of an apartment, company health insurance benefits or similar) provided by the host institute or other funding organisations; and benefits received by the fellow in accordance with the legislation on parental allowance and parental leave (*Bundeseltern- und Elternzeitgesetz*, BEEG).

V. Benefits for Fellowship Recipients with Children

1. Child allowance

A monthly child allowance is paid for children up to 18 years of age (in accordance with section 2, paragraph 1, clauses 1 and 2 of the Federal Child Benefit Act [*Bundeskindergeldgesetz, BKGG*]).

The allowance totals EUR 400/month for the first child and EUR 100/month for each additional child.

Children of life partners can only be considered if it can be satisfactorily shown that they lived in the household of the fellow prior to the start of the fellowship (e.g. verification by the local German registry office [*Einwohnermeldeamt*]).

2. Support for costs associated with supplemental child care – fellowship extension or child care allowance

If, during the fellowship, you are accompanied abroad by your children who are younger than 12 years of age, you can select from the following options:

2.1 Fellowship extension

The fellowship can be extended by up to 12 months if, at the time the fellowship is granted, you have at least one child who is younger than 12 years of age. This also applies if the first child is born during the course of the fellowship.

2.2 Child-care costs

Instead of extending the fellowship by 12 months, it is possible to apply for child-care costs. Here, a maximum of the equivalent basic monthly fellowship amount is available for each extension month that is not used. This conversion of monthly basic allowances to child-care costs can be handled flexibly. For example, the fellowship can be extended by five months and a child care allowance can be received for seven months.

The child-care costs must be verified by presenting bills and payment receipts. The following items may be reimbursed:

- the placement of children in kindergartens, day-care centres, day nurseries, children's homes and nursery schools as well as with child care providers,
- costs for international schools at the fellowship location,
- the employment of child-care specialists, nurses and children's nurses as well as household help, provided they care for a child,
- babysitters and au pairs,
- supervision during homework time.

During stays in countries where the cost of professional child care is above average (e.g. in the USA), additional costs that exceed the base allowances specified above can be recognised in justified, individual cases. A requirement for this, however, is that the fellow contribute 50% of the costs in excess of the base fellowship amount.

VI. Other Financial Assistance During the Fellowship

The DFG offers additional financial support during the fellowship period to facilitate the fellows' transition back to the German research system.

These measures may be applied for separately no sooner than six months after the start of the fellowship; for return grants, no sooner than 12 months after the start of the fellowship.

1. Travel support for establishing or intensifying scientific contacts in Germany

The DFG supports your efforts to re-establish or intensify contacts in Germany during the second and/or third year of your stay abroad.

If you are staying abroad for at least 18 months, even if part of the stay abroad is funded from outside sources, the DFG will provide you with up to two travel allowances for active participation at a conference, colloquium, for a lecture trip, to present research findings, for interviews in Germany (provided the costs are not covered by the host), or to establish or maintain scientific contacts in Germany.

Fellows who have spent at least six months abroad are eligible to apply. The trips are to be completed within three years after beginning the DFG-fellowship.

2. Moving allowance for international fellowships

A moving allowance towards the relocation costs on return to Germany is granted upon application if you are returning to Germany from a stay abroad within three months of completion of the fellowship, or after completion of a subsequent stay of up to one year funded by the host institute.

Fellows who are returning to Germany from countries outside of Europe are granted an allowance of EUR 1,000. An additional EUR 500 is granted for the spouse or life partner registered in accordance with German law as well as an additional EUR 250 per child.

Fellows who are returning to Germany from countries within Europe are granted an allowance of EUR 500. An additional EUR 250 is granted for the spouse or life partner registered in accordance with German law as well as for each child.

A moving allowance can only be paid if the fellowship approved by the DFG lasts at least six months and the moving costs are not assumed by a third party.

3. Return grants for reintegration in the German research system

To facilitate the reintegration of grant recipients back into the German research system, fellows funded by the DFG may submit a supplemental proposal for a return grant. The proposals, in the form of a simple letter, should be sent to the DFG staff who administered your preceding award. Funding should be used to enable fellows to become reintegrated into the German research system, for example by presenting research findings in Germany or for measures preparing them for their scientific/academic careers following their return to Germany.

Return grants can be applied for as domestic fellowships for a maximum of six months. To be eligible, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Applicants must reside abroad through a fellowship financed by the DFG, whereby the total duration of the stay abroad must be at least 12 months and have been funded primarily by the DFG.
- Applicants must have resided abroad without interruption.
- The proposal must be submitted from abroad no later than two months prior to the planned use of the return grant.
- The return grant must be taken up no later than four years following the start of the fellowship.
- This period of up to four years must have been spent abroad continuously.
- Applicants must not be on leave from a German research institution for the duration of the fellowship with the possibility of again working at the institution upon return from abroad.

The return grant should be used to continue research in the same scientific area. To carry out such research, recipients must be affiliated with a university or other research institution. An invitation from the host institution must be included in the proposal.

The subject area within which the applicant will work during the time funded by the grant is to be specified in the proposal. A project description is not necessary.

If the stay abroad is not funded exclusively by the DFG, the associated stay abroad is to be documented.

A declaration is to be included with the application that shows that the applicant will not be funded by other means upon return.

The grant will be terminated once the fellow has taken up a position or receives outside funding (e.g. from the Federal Employment Agency) in Germany. Recipients must notify the DFG of such changes immediately.

VII. Proposal Format and Submission

Proposals for research fellowships may be submitted at any time. Please refer to section VI. 3 for deadlines for proposals for return grants.

Your signed proposal should not exceed 20 pages and should be fully understandable without reference to cited or enclosed literature.

Please submit your proposal in written form (hole-punched and without binders, plastic pockets, etc.) and include an electronic version on CD-ROM, preferably as a PDF file (or RTF file). To facilitate the processing of your proposal, the document security settings should allow your documents to be read, copied and printed. Proposal documents (e.g. publications, dissertation thesis, complete list of publications, etc.) should be submitted as separate PDF files and saved according to the naming protocol provided in the appendix. The written copy should be sent to the DFG division responsible for your subject area.

For additional requirements for proposals for return grants, please refer to section VI 3.

To enable the reviewers to carry out a technical review of the proposal, the following information and attachments are required. *To simplify processing, please respond to the items in the order listed below, using the Arial font if possible*

1. Personal information and level of education according to the Questionnaire for Fellowship Applicants (DFG form 10.05e, which can be downloaded from the DFG's website and completed electronically)
2. Details on the planned research:
 - a) Topic
 - b) Summary:
Please summarise the key objectives of the intended research in non-technical terms and in no more than 15 lines (max. 1,600 characters).

The summary has two main goals:

- It will inform the interdisciplinary committees of the DFG, which make the final decision on your grant, of the principal aims of your project.
 - If your project is funded, the summary will be published on the internet through an electronic information system. It should therefore be concise as well as comprehensible to a lay public. An electronic search will be helped if you avoid abbreviations and include suitable key words.
- c) A presentation of the current state of knowledge as relevant to the proposal according to scientific conventions
 - d) Your scientific objectives and any preliminary work carried out in conjunction with the proposed project
 - e) Your work schedule and the proposed methods of investigation

3. Details on the significance that this research is likely to have on your further scientific and professional career

The DFG expects its fellows to return to a German university or other German research institution following completion of their training. Please provide details of your plans as concretely as possible.

4. Details on the duration of the planned research and of the time period for which the fellowship is being requested
5. Details on the considerations that led to your selection of the group which you have chosen to work with abroad on this topic

Please note the following: **If the foreign host is an ex-Humboldt visiting researcher**, please only initially apply to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Jean-Paul-Straße 12, 53173 Bonn, Germany). Only if the Humboldt Foundation rejects/declines your proposal or informs you in response to your proposal that there is no possibility of funding for you, may you apply for a DFG research fellowship. In this case, please include a copy of the letter from the Humboldt Foundation with your proposal.

6. Details of any benefits or grants available to you from other sources, or for which you have applied
7. State whether you wish to apply for publication costs and the amount requested

Please enclose with the proposal:

8. A detailed curriculum vitae in tabular form (including school and university education). Applicants who wish to explain reasons for unavoidable delays in their scientific career (e.g. longer stages of qualification, publication gaps or limited stays abroad due to child care, protracted illnesses or disability, etc.) should directly indicate the respective circumstance. It is, however, not mandatory that such personal information be disclosed when submitting a proposal to the DFG. The voluntary disclosure may, however, be important in certain cases as it assists in explaining otherwise unjustifiable gaps in the scientific career path. Further information on the topic of diversity and equal opportunities in the funding programmes of the DFG can be found at www.dfg.de/diversity.
9. The invitation of the host with whom you wish to undertake the project
10. A reference from a scientist/academic about you and about the intended research. This may either be submitted by you together with the other documents or it may be sent directly to the DFG by the individual providing your reference. In the latter case, you should first submit your proposal and then wait for the confirmation of receipt that we will send to you which contains a reference number. It is important that you then pass this reference number on to the individual to ensure that the statement can be associated with your proposal.
11. Copies of certificates (diploma, doctorate), a list of your publications, your doctoral thesis and one copy each of any other significant publications. These will be returned to you once a decision on your proposal has been reached.
12. If submitting the proposal prior to completion of the doctorate (but after having submitted the thesis to the examination office, the earliest possible time at which a proposal may be submitted): provide a statement from the person who supervised your thesis with regard to your chances for succeeding with your doctoral project (submit according to the options listed under section II).

VIII. Obligations

If you have applied for a fellowship from other German funding organisations on the same or a related research topic, please note that, in the case of multiple awards, accepting such a fellowship before or after approval of the DFG fellowship precludes your being able to accept fellowship funding from the DFG. However, it is still possible to supplement a DFG fellowship abroad with funding from the foreign host institution (cf. section IV. 7).

In submitting a proposal for a DFG research fellowship, you agree to:

1. **Adhere to the rules of good scientific practice¹.**

In cases of scientific misconduct, the DFG may impose sanctions. Scientific misconduct is defined as the intentional and grossly negligent statement of falsehoods in a scientific context, the violation of intellectual property rights or impeding another person's research work. The circumstances of each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Depending on the nature and extent of the misconduct exposed, the DFG may:

- issue a written reprimand to the person involved;
- exclude those found responsible from the right to apply for DFG funds for a period of one to eight years, depending on the severity of the scientific misconduct;
- revoke funding decisions (completely or partially revoke approvals and demand the return of authorised funds or the repayment of funds spent);
- demand that those concerned either retract the publications containing false data, correct the false data (by publishing an erratum) or include a reference regarding the DFG's retraction of funds in the relevant publication;
- exclude those found responsible from acting as a reviewer or from membership on DFG committees;
- deny those responsible the right to vote in DFG elections.

2. Dedicate yourself to the expeditious realisation of the intended research (secondary employment is only permissible in exceptional cases, i.e. if it does not have a negative impact on the objectives of the fellowship, and requires written permission from the DFG).

3. Report completely on the current status of your research work according to scientific conventions, listing all interim results up to that juncture, no later than four months following the end of funding by the DFG. For recipients of return grants: please indicate whether reintegration into the German research system was achieved and, if so, how.

4. Not accept concurrent funding from other German research funding organisations. Other concurrent funding (e.g. from foreign institutions) as well as all outside funding must be reported to the DFG immediately; such funding will be offset against the DFG fellowship award. Any personal or financial changes that may affect the fellowship amount must also be reported to the DFG immediately.

¹ The rules of good scientific practice are presented in detail in the white paper "Proposals for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice" (published by Wiley-VCH) and in the Usage Guidelines for Research Grants, DFG forms 2.01 and 2.02 (available on the internet at http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/forms/index/html or under "Proposal Process").

IX. Publication of Data on Grant Holders and Research Projects

The data necessary for processing your grant proposal will be stored and processed electronically by the DFG. If a grant is awarded, your work address (e.g. telephone, fax, e-mail, internet website), as well as information on the content of your research project (e.g. topic, summary, keywords, international cooperation), will be published in the DFG's project database GEPRIIS (<http://www.dfg.de/gepris>) and - in excerpts (grant holder's name, institution and location) in the "Programmes and Projects" section of the electronic annual report (<http://www.dfg.de/jahresbericht>). If you do not wish this information to be published electronically, please notify us in writing no later than four weeks after receipt of your award letter.

Appendix: Naming Protocol for Proposal Documents

To facilitate the processing of your proposal, we request that you use the following document names when submitting your proposal.

Document	Document Name
final report (Abschlussbericht)	Abschlussbericht
proposal (Antrag)	Antrag
proposal-related list of publications (antragsrelevantes Publikationsverzeichnis)	A_Publikationsverzeichnis_<person's last name>
reference (Befuerwortung)	Befuerwortung_<last name of person providing reference>
dissertation (Dissertationsschrift)	Dissertation_<last name of author>
ethics statement (Ethikvotum)	Ethikvotum
recipient questionnaire (Fragebogen Stipendiat)	Fragebogen_<last name of fellowship recipient>
complete list of publications (komplettes Publikationsverzeichnis)	K_Publikationsverzeichnis_<person's last name>
curriculum vitae (Lebenslauf)	Lebenslauf_<person's last name>
publications (Publikationen)	<year>_<lastname_author>_<keyword>
certificates (Zeugnisse)	<type of certificate>_<person's last name>
confirmation by host (Zusage des Gastgebers)	Arbeitsplatzzusage
interim report (Zwischenbericht)	Zwischenbericht