

**Disclaimer: Only the German version of the Inclusion Agreement is legally binding.
The English translation is provided for information purposes only.**

Inclusion Agreement of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft e.V. (DFG, German Research Foundation) – Target Group: Employees of the DFG Head Office (Section 166, Book IX of the German Social Code – SGB IX)

Entered into force on 8 May 2025

Preamble

1. The DFG within the German research system

The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft e.V. (DFG, German Research Foundation), a registered non-profit association under German law and a publicly funded research funding organisation, acts in all its procedures in a research-driven manner, as set out in its Statutes. According to Section 1 para. 2 of the Statutes, excellent research requires a broad spectrum of ideas and pluralistic debate; for this reason, the DFG takes particular care to promote international cooperation, early career researchers, gender equality and diversity in science and the humanities.

2. Inclusion in funding activities

In order to implement these objectives in its funding activities, the DFG continuously reviews and applies measures. In addition, the DFG provides key impetus for equity, diversity and inclusion in the German research system through its Code of Conduct *Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice* (www.dfg.de/good_research_practice) and the *Research-Oriented Equity and Diversity Standards* (for further information, see: www.dfg.de/equity).

3. Target group of this Inclusion Agreement

For the purposes of this Inclusion Agreement as it relates to employees of the DFG Head Office, the objective of diversity is of particular relevance. As one of its aspects it includes the equal inclusion of persons with disabilities. The Contracting Parties are mindful, in particular with regard to the employees of the DFG Head Office:

- (1) that persons with disabilities or severe disabilities (or those deemed equivalent under the law) are subject to a considerable additional burden over and above the general demands of work, everyday life and family life faced by everyone. This additional burden arises not only from the permanent individual health impairment (for example: restricted senses, limited stamina, restricted mobility, pain, side effects of medication), but also from the consequences of the latter in terms of the organisation of professional and private life (for example: additional time required for frequent medical treatments; the additional daily necessity to arrange disability-related services; further administrative effort due to application procedures vis-à-vis authorities; increased need for rest).
- (2) that the great majority of all permanent (more than six months) and significant health impairments (chronic illness, disability or severe disability) are not immediately visible, and that those affected must therefore actively disclose them.
- (3) that a climate of trust and respect, together with the consideration of inclusion in leadership and error culture, is vital to the decision of those affected as to whether to disclose their health issues in working life. This provides the basis for jointly developing individual support measures in a trusting manner.

§ 1 Scope

- (1) This Inclusion Agreement applies to employees of the DFG Head Office.
- (2) This Inclusion Agreement does not apply directly to persons engaged in voluntary activities for the DFG in the context of its funding operations (e.g. reviewers or committee members). Barrier-reduced inclusion for this group of persons shall only be considered by the DFG Head Office where their interests are affected. This includes, in particular, the design or rental of premises, the organisation of work processes, online information, forms and documents, IT systems used, and the organisation of meetings and events.

§ 2 Contracting Parties

This Inclusion Agreement is concluded between the Secretary General of the DFG (Head of the DFG Head Office), the Chair of the Works Council of the DFG Head Office, and the Representative of Severely Disabled Persons of the DFG Head Office.

§ 3 Review (2025)

(1) The DFG Head Office has for many years met the statutory employment quota for persons with disabilities or persons of equivalent status (statutory employment quota of at least 5%). The relevant detailed information is contained in the regularly issued Personnel and Social Report. Due to a combination of increased overall staffing levels, the expiry of fixed-term disability certificates, and the retirement of employees with severe disabilities or of equivalent status, the proportion of severely disabled employees has steadily declined towards the statutory 5% threshold for several years.

(2) Persons with disabilities are markedly underrepresented in leadership positions at the DFG Head Office.

(3) Groups requiring particular attention within the category of severely disabled employees or those of equivalent status include: trainees, women and employees on fixed-term contracts.

§ 4 Objectives

(1) **Employment quota:** A central objective of this Inclusion Agreement is to ensure continued compliance with the statutory employment quota (5%). Where a corresponding pool of applicants is available, it is desirable that this quota be significantly exceeded¹. Job advertisements issued by the DFG are drafted inclusively, and the DFG application portal is supplemented with relevant information for applicants with long-term health impairments.

(2) **Inclusion-sensitive leadership culture:** The DFG Head Office regards competence in inclusion as an integral element of leadership competence. Training programmes for managers at the DFG Head Office also cover the issue of inclusion in working life. The Representative for Severely Disabled Persons at the DFG Head Office regularly provides relevant training sessions for managers. The option of individual consultation with the Representative for Severely Disabled Persons on inclusion at the workplace, and on organisational and financial support available from the competent authorities, is of course also available to managers at any time.

(3) **Inclusion-sensitive working climate:** An inclusion-sensitive working climate at all hierarchical levels is essential in order to ensure equal participation in working life and to counter social isolation of persons with disabilities at the workplace. At the same time, such a climate facilitates the disclosure of health-related issues, thereby enabling a culture of learning from error that is sensitive to inclusion. The Representative for Severely Disabled Persons at the DFG Head Office regularly offers appropriate training for all staff on the

¹ With reference to the general population, there were 7.9 million severely disabled persons in Germany as of the end of 2023 (equivalent to 9.3% with a disability certificate). Of these, 50.1% were men and 49.9% women. (Source: www.destatis.de, press release dated 19 July 2024)

subject of inclusion at the workplace and introduces themselves to all new employees on induction days. Information and external links are also provided on the Representative's intranet page.

(4) Fixed-term employees and trainees: Special attention must be paid to the situation of severely disabled or equivalent-status employees on fixed-term contracts and severely disabled or equivalent-status trainees. This group is typically at risk of disadvantage on the general labour market. An insecure employment situation and the necessity of seeking a new position during the final phase of a fixed-term employment contract or training programme constitute a considerable additional physical and psychological burden for this already heavily challenged group. Accordingly, efforts should be made in such cases to provide a binding assurance of subsequent continued employment at the earliest possible stage, ideally at least three months before the expiry of the fixed-term employment contract or training agreement.

(5) Remote working / attendance days at the DFG Head Office: As a matter of principle, the agreements reached on remote working apply equally to employees with long-term health impairments (chronic illness, disability, severe disability or equivalent status). In exceptional cases, however, the number of required attendance days at the Head Office may be individually adjusted (normally on a temporary basis) in line with the needs arising from the disability, in consultation with the employee concerned, Human Resources, the responsible manager and the Representative for Severely Disabled Persons. Where appropriate, such an arrangement may also be made in the context of occupational reintegration management (BEM, betriebliches Eingliederungsmanagement) discussions.

(6) Barrier-reduced accessibility / degree of barrier-free accessibility of workplaces

The main building of the DFG Head Office at Kennedyallee 40 and the premises rented in the neighbouring Wissenschaftszentrum offer barrier-reduced accessibility (certain entrances are accessible subject to limitations). When recruiting staff, care must be taken to ensure that a sufficiently accessible workplace is made available in each individual case where necessary. The criterion of barrier-reduced accessibility / degree of barrier-free accessibility must be taken into account in the conversion, acquisition or rental of premises and in the design of workplaces. The lifts provided are a key element of the barrier-reduced accessibility / degree of barrier-free accessibility of buildings. They may only be switched off in the event of defects or fire and must be repaired immediately in the event of technical failure.

(7) Barrier-reduced accessibility / degree of barrier-free accessibility of documents, publications, online information etc.: Documents, publications, online information, presentations etc. provided by the DFG shall be designed in accordance with the standards of barrier-reduced accessibility / degree of barrier-free accessibility applicable at the time.

Information relating to the DFG and barrier-reduced accessibility / degree of barrier-free accessibility is made publicly available on the DFG website.

(8) Barrier-reduced accessibility of work equipment and tools, in particular IT

applications: When procuring individual work equipment, the health-related needs of DFG employees shall be appropriately taken into account. However, priority must be given to asserting any entitlement that may exist vis-à-vis the social security bodies responsible for occupational integration. The Representative for Severely Disabled Persons shall provide advice on this if required. When developing or procuring work equipment and tools – in particular IT hardware and IT applications/programmes intended for long-term use and for use at multiple workplaces – appropriate barrier-reduced accessibility in line with the state of the art shall be ensured, taking account of statutory provisions, the level of effort required and economic considerations. Relevant information on barrier-reduced accessibility / degree of barrier-free accessibility shall be obtained from and documented with external providers or service contractors.

(9) Training and/or information on barrier-reduced/barrier-free accessibility and on

features facilitating the use of IT applications/programmes: Training and/or information shall be provided to all employees on the barrier-reduced / barrier-free accessibility functions and features facilitating use in essential IT applications.

(10) Barrier-reduced accessibility when organising in-person meetings and events: In-person meetings and events held by the DFG shall be organised with the required degree of barrier-free accessibility if necessary. The central event management unit or the responsible organisational unit of the DFG shall routinely enquire about such needs. The Representative for Severely Disabled Persons shall provide materials on the intranet relating to organising meetings in a way that ensures barrier-reduced accessibility and shall offer training on this topic.

(11) Barrier-reduced accessibility when organising online meetings and online events:

The organisation of online meetings and online events to ensure barrier-reduced accessibility requires appropriate technical and organisational arrangements. The responsible organisational unit of the DFG Head Office shall develop an internal guidance document for staff on this topic in cooperation with the Representative for Severely Disabled Persons. When acquiring online conferencing software, sufficient barrier-reduced accessibility of such IT applications must be ensured, as these are typically used for both internal and external meetings. The Representative for Severely Disabled Persons shall provide materials on the intranet on organising online meetings in a way that ensures barrier-reduced accessibility.

(12) Training opportunities offering barrier-reduced accessibility: When selecting training providers or training software, the aspect of barrier-reduced accessibility must be appropriately considered. In individual cases where participation problems arise, support for

the development of an appropriate solution to enable participation shall be provided by Human Resources and the Representative for Severely Disabled Persons.

(13) **Business travel:** Special disability-related requirements shall be appropriately taken into account in connection with business travel within the framework of the applicable travel cost regulations.

§ 5 Reporting Obligations

(1) The employer's obligation to provide written reports is fulfilled by the information contained in the regular internal Personnel and Social Report.

(2) The Representative for Severely Disabled Persons and the employer shall report on progress in the implementation of this Agreement at the Assembly of Severely Disabled Persons. All employees of the DFG Head Office are invited to attend this Assembly if they wish.

(3) Further oral reporting obligations concerning the implementation of this Agreement are fulfilled through the regular fixed meetings held involving the Representative for Severely Disabled Persons, the Head of Human Resources, and the Secretary General of the DFG. The Representative for Severely Disabled Persons shall also report to the Works Council as appropriate in the context of regular participation in Works Council meetings.

§ 6 Final Provisions

(1) This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of signature by the last of the Contracting Parties. It may be terminated by any Contracting Party with one year's notice. In the event of termination, the Contracting Parties shall endeavour to conclude a new Inclusion Agreement before the termination of the present Agreement. This Agreement may be amended or updated at any time by mutual consent of all Contracting Parties.

(2) The competent Employment Agency and the competent Inclusion Office shall receive a copy of this Agreement for their information.

(3) This Agreement shall be published on the DFG intranet (for employees) and on the DFG internet site (for applicants and other interested parties).