



## Programme Information

### Feodor Lynen Research Fellowships

#### for postdocs and experienced researchers

In providing Feodor Lynen Research Fellowships for postdocs and experienced researchers, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation enables highly-qualified scientists and scholars from Germany to spend extended periods of research abroad. Scientists and scholars from all disciplines may apply for any country abroad. Postdocs can apply up to four years after completing their doctorates for a sponsorship period of 6–24 months. Experienced researchers can apply up to twelve years after completing their doctorates for a sponsorship period of 6–18 months. Short-term visits for study and training purposes or for attending conferences are not eligible for sponsorship.

The duration of the fellowship may be divided up into a maximum of three visits, with each visit lasting at least three months. As a rule, no more than 36 months may elapse between the beginning of the first stay and the end of the last stay.

All members of the Humboldt Network abroad may act as academic hosts for the Feodor Lynen Research Fellowship Programme. These include:

- Any scientists or scholars who have been sponsored by the Humboldt Foundation,
- Any hosts who have already supervised scientists or scholars who were sponsored by the Humboldt Foundation,
- Any (former) members of a Humboldt Foundation selection committee,
- Any participants in the Frontiers of Research Symposia organised by the Humboldt Foundation.

In addition, scientists or scholars who have been awarded one of the [selected research prizes](#) may act as hosts. The Humboldt Foundation can provide assistance with finding a host.

The research outline is carried out in cooperation with academic hosts at research institutions abroad. Applicants choose their own topic of research and their host abroad and prepare their research outline independently. Details of the research outline including information on the intended duration of the fellowship must be agreed with the intended host before applying.

The Humboldt Foundation expects the host to contribute to financing the research fellowship. Over the duration of the fellowship, the host's contribution should account for approximately a third of the total fellowship amount. However, host institutes in developing and threshold countries and in other selected countries (c.f. [list of countries](#)) are not required to make a financial contribution. If a host in another country experiences obvious difficulties in raising a contribution, the Humboldt Foundation may accommodate this particular case.

Decisions to award fellowships are based solely on the evaluation of the candidate's academic qualification. An individual's personal and educational background – including and especially

with regard to equal opportunities and accessibility – are also taken into account. There are no quotas for individual disciplines or countries.

A candidate's academic qualification is assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- academic record and academic performance to date (mobility, determination, breadth of research activities, academic productivity)
- quality of key publications specified in the application (originality, degree of innovation, applicant's contribution in cases of multiple authorship)
- originality and innovation potential of the suggested research outline (significance for the advancement of the discipline, convincing choice of academic methods, prospects for academic development of the applicant, clear focus and feasibility of realization within the requested funding period and at the chosen host institution)
- the applicant's future potential (academic potential, further academic development, career prospects)
- applicants who are applying as **experienced researchers** are also expected to have their own, clearly defined personal academic profile. This means they should usually already be working at least as an assistant professor, lead a junior research group or be able to document several years of independent research work

Applications are assessed academically on the basis of a peer review process in relation to the career level of applicants (time after completion of the doctorate). The final decision on all applications for both program lines is taken by a selection committee within the framework of the funding available (for further information on the selection procedure, see "Application and selection procedure"). A stay abroad in the framework of the Humboldt Foundation's research fellowships for German junior researchers does not count towards the so-called "Twelve-Year Rule" in the University Framework Law.

### **Fellowship specifications**

The provisions of the fellowship comprise a basic monthly fellowship amount and a monthly foreign allowance which may differ according to location and marital status. Family allowances for partners and children may be granted in addition. The estimated amount of the fellowship can be calculated with the "fellowship calculator" ([Stipendienrechner](#)).

Additional benefits:

- **return travel expenses** within reasonable limits (also for partners and children, where applicable)
- **parenting support** for research fellows who are accompanied abroad by children under the age of twelve. This support can alternatively be applied for in the form of an extension of the research fellowship or as a reimbursement of costs for childcare
- **reintegration allowance** for attending job interviews or participating in important career-promoting conferences in Germany

- a **return fellowship** may be granted for a maximum of twelve months immediately following the research stay abroad. It allows fellows to continue cooperation with their hosts in association with a research institution in Germany
- **alumni sponsorship** following a successful stay abroad, especially financial assistance for participating in conferences and for short-term visits from or to members of the Humboldt Network abroad (or in Germany when living abroad).

There are further support options for research fellows with **disabilities or chronic illnesses**.

For further information on the fellowship and the research stay abroad, please refer to the [Guidelines and Information for Feodor Lynen Research Fellowships](#).

The Humboldt Foundation assumes that candidates will abide the [Rules of Good Scientific Practice](#) and the legally binding principles of scientific ethics during the application and sponsorship periods.

### **Application requirements**

1. **Doctorate** or comparable academic degree, completed (the last academic achievement) no longer than four years prior to the date of application for postdocs or twelve years for experienced researchers;
2. **Academic publications** in journals and by publishers reviewed according to international standards, commensurate with the applicant's career level after completion of the doctorate;
3. **Confirmation that research facilities are available and mentoring agreement** and a **detailed expert's statement** from an academic host at a research institution abroad who is eligible to act as such in the Feodor Lynen Research Fellowship Programme (see above).
4. **Two expert reviews** from important collaborative partners and/or academics from the candidate's own institute and, if possible, from abroad. Postdocs should usually request one of the expert reviews from the doctoral thesis supervisor.
5. **Necessary language skills:** good knowledge of the language spoken in the host country or at least a very good knowledge of English.

Potential applicants who have been in the host country for more than six months within the last 18 months prior to submitting the application are not eligible to apply. Any person who, regardless of their country of residence, has supported themselves for more than six out of the last 18 months with financing from institutions in the host country also is not eligible to apply.

Academics who have already been sponsored by the Humboldt Foundation are not eligible to apply for the Feodor Lynen Research Fellowship Programme but should turn to the Foundation's Alumni Programme for support of further research visits.

### **Application and selection procedure**

Applications can only be submitted online. The completed application form, including the necessary additional documents, should be submitted at least four to seven months ahead of the prospective selection date. The selection committee meets every year in February, June and October.

Visit the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's website for further information on the [online application](#) process and all necessary documents as well as access to the online application system. A confirmation of receipt will be issued after the application has been submitted.

The expert reviews and the host's confidential statement must be uploaded by their authors directly to the applicant's online application form. The applicant will send the link needed to access the application form via e-mail to the designated persons. It is only possible to submit the application once all documents have been uploaded completely.

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their documents are complete. Incomplete applications will be excluded from the selection procedure.

After a review of the documents, applicants will be notified about the proposed selection date. The academic assessment of the applications is carried out by independent peer reviewers assigned by the Humboldt Foundation. Based on the academic assessment, an interdisciplinary selection committee composed of about 20 academics reaches a decision on approving research fellowships.

If funding is awarded, sponsorship abroad begins on the start date given in the application or on the earliest possible date after that. Under certain conditions, the start date may be postponed for up to 12 months. After a negative selection decision, candidates and their hosts may apply informally by email to be informed about the factors which led to a rejection. It is not possible to appeal. However, applicants who have been rejected may submit a revised application provided that fundamental aspects of the original application have been significantly improved.

Further information on the selection procedure can be found in the [Questions & Answers](#) on the Humboldt Foundation's website as well as in the application form.