



Programme Information

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation International Climate Protection Fellowships for postdoctoral researchers

With the International Climate Protection Fellowships for postdoctoral researchers, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation enables researchers to implement long-term research proposals (12-24 months) in the field of climate protection or climate-related resource conservation in Germany.

Up to 5 International Climate Protection Fellowships are granted annually to postdoctoral researchers, funded under the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety's (BMU) International Climate Initiative. The fellowships target postdoctoral researchers from non-European transition and developing countries (see [list of countries](#)). Candidates draw up their own research proposal which they then implement in collaboration with a host in Germany. The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation runs the programme in cooperation with the Federation of German Industry (BDI), the Centre for International Postgraduate Studies in Environmental Management (CIPSEM) at TU Dresden, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU), the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Renewables Academy AG (RENAC).

Programme objectives:

The global challenge posed by climate change can only be met by cross-border international collaborations. By enabling future decision-makers and multipliers to share knowledge, methods and techniques with specialist colleagues in Germany the programme promotes this objective, particularly by taking account of issues relating to practical applicability in the fellows' own countries. In the spirit of the Agenda 2030 and the related Sustainable Development Goals, the programme seeks to contribute to the achievement of these goals by fostering prospective leaders with their undertakings and projects to combat climate change, to develop and implement adaptation strategies, to preserve ecosystems and biodiversity and to foster the sustainable use of the oceans and seas. Furthermore, it addresses sustainability topics relating to natural resources, resource-efficient consumption and urban development. The programme promotes the development of long-term contacts and collaboration with colleagues in Germany.

Target group:

Postdoctoral researchers applying for this programme must be doing research in **the field of climate protection or climate-related resource conservation**; they should have proven **leadership skills**, which must be convincingly demonstrated in the application and supported by appropriate references. In addition to researchers with a background in the natural and engineering sciences, candidates who have been engaged in legal, economic, health-related and societal issues relating to climate change are encouraged to apply for this programme.

Application requirements:

- **First university degree** (Bachelor's or equivalent), completed less than 12 years previously, counting back from the end of the application period (1 March 2021)
- **Leadership skills** demonstrated by initial experience in leadership positions and/or appropriate references
- **Doctorate or comparable academic degree** (Ph.D., C.Sc. or equivalent) in the field of climate protection or climate-related resource conservation, completed less than four years prior to the date of application or until August 31, 2021
- **Scientific publications** in peer-reviewed journals according to international standards
- Choice of a **research project** in the field of climate protection or climate-related resource conservation
- **A detailed statement by a host in Germany, including a mentoring agreement**; details of the proposal must be discussed with the prospective host prior to application
- **Citizenship of a non-European transition or developing country** (see list of countries) which is also the applicant's habitual residence and place of work
- **Very good knowledge of English and/or German**, documented by appropriate language certificates
- **Expert reviews** from the doctoral supervisor and one other academic qualified to give well-founded comments on the applicant's qualification and leadership skills, preferably including reviewers not working at the applicant's own institute

Selection criteria:

- Academic and professional **career** to date (mobility, determination, expertise, academic success)
- Assessment of the **scientific qualification** (quality of submitted key publications)
- **Leadership skills** (initial experience in leadership positions and/or appropriate references)
- **Quality, originality and relevance of the research proposal** (convincing selection of methods, clear focus and feasibility, relevance to climate protection or climate-related resource conservation, viability of both the host institution chosen and the concomitant communication strategy)
- **Future potential** (further development in academia and industry, career prospects)

Fellowship specifications:

The **monthly fellowship** amount is €2,670 for postdoctoral researchers. This includes a mobility lump sum and a contribution towards health and liability insurance.

Common **programme activities** during the first twelve months of the fellowship period allow fellows to gain an overview of specialist topics and important players in the fields of climate protection and climate-related resource conservation. Participation is obligatory. The following mandatory timetable is designed to facilitate networking amongst the fellows:

- January, February 2022: intensive German language course in Bonn (optional)
- March 2022: three-week introductory seminar at several locations in
- April 2022 – February 2023: work on research-based projects
- June 2022: Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's Annual Meeting, including reception held by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany in Berlin
- Autumn 2022: two-week study tour through Germany

- January/February 2023: final week, including reception in the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
- Afterwards: continuation of the research proposal for the period applied for; individual trainings and participation in programme events of the Foundation (optional)

Additional benefits:

- **Allowance for research costs** amounting to €800 per month for research-based proposals in the natural and engineering sciences and €500 for proposals in the humanities and social sciences.
- **Language fellowship** for a one- to two-month intensive German language course in Germany immediately prior to the fellowship. When a fellowship has been granted, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation may provide financial support for improving fellows' existing German language skills while they are still in their own countries. Fellows with little or no knowledge of German are strongly advised to take a two-month intensive language course in Germany.
- **Lump sum for travel expenses** if the costs are not borne by a third party.
- **Europe allowance** for a maximum of one to two months spent researching at an institution in another European country during the fellowship, provided that this is necessary to carry out the research-based project in question.
- **Family allowances for visits by family members** staying at least three months (up to €346 per month for the marital partner and up to €274 EUR per month for each child).
- **Allowances for single parents accompanied by children** under the age of 18 who are staying at least three months (€400 per month for the first child, €100 per month for every additional child).
- **Extension of the fellowship** by up to twelve months if children under the age of 12 accompany the fellow to Germany.
- **Extensive alumni funding** after successfully completing the initial stay in Germany, especially support for networking with collaborative partners in Germany during the fellow's entire career.

Eligible applicants must have lived in an eligible country (detailed [list of countries](#)) for a minimum of 12 months in the 18-month period prior to submission of the application. They must have lived outside Germany for a minimum of 12 months in total in the 18-month period prior to submission of the application.

Applicants who have already received sponsorship from the Humboldt Foundation in the form of a fellowship or award are not entitled to apply to this programme but should turn to the appropriate alumni sponsorship programmes. Those sponsored in the context of the International Climate Protection Fellowships are excluded from applying for other fellowships offered by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

Application procedure:

Applications can only be submitted online. The completed application form, including the necessary additional documents, must be submitted not later than **1 March 2021**.

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 immediately after the application has been submitted.

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

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.

After reviewing the applications, an independent selection committee will decide, by early July 2021, which candidates will be invited to participate in a **selection meeting in Germany** lasting several days. The committee is composed of academics and practitioners working in the relevant fields. The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation usually also obtains independent peer reviews. The selection meeting will take place in September 2021 and applicants will be given the opportunity to outline their proposal to the selection committee and the other applicants as well as to attend individual interviews held by the selection committee. The selection results will be announced at the end of the meeting. Further information on the selection procedure can be found in the [FAQs](#) on the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's website.

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. For further information on this, please refer to section D of the [Guidelines and Information for International Climate Protection Fellows](#), which also include further details pertaining to the fellowship and to the research stay.