



Programme Information

Max Planck-Humboldt Research Award

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Max Planck Society jointly grant the Max Planck-Humboldt Research Award endowed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research to exceptional scientists and scholars from outside Germany. The award is granted in recognition of the outstanding academic contributions these promising individuals have made to date. Presented to researchers up to 15 years post doctorate, the award is aimed at those of which scientific breakthroughs can be expected in the future due to their previously highly successful, unconventional, innovative and risk-taking research.

In addition to recognising the entire academic record to date the award is intended to enable the award winning researchers to set up a working group in Germany, preferably at a university. Other creative and promising research formats, which correspond to the research interests and working methods of the award winners in a particular way, can also be funded – with the aim of shaping cooperation with specialist colleagues in Germany as permanently as possible.

One award is announced annually on an alternate basis in the fields of chemistry, physics and technology, biology and medicine or humanities and social sciences.

Selection procedure

The Max Planck Society appoints an international nomination committee to identify three deserving candidates for the research award. Essential criteria for selection are the academic achievements to date and the expectation of scientific breakthroughs in the future. No other routes for nomination are possible.

Researchers whose scientific achievements have previously been honoured with an award by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation shall not be nominated. At the time of nomination, the nominated candidate must have been predominantly living and working outside Germany for at least five years. Furthermore, no employment relationship may exist in Germany at the time of selection or have been agreed for the future.

A joint, independent selection committee of the Max Planck Society and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, chaired by the President of the Humboldt Foundation, decides finally on the selection of the Max Planck-Humboldt Research Award winner.



Provided that the selection committee confirms that the entire academic record to date of the two other nominees is award-worthy, they are awarded with the **Max Planck-Humboldt Medal**. This award is endowed with an amount totalling EUR 80,000 and is bestowed according to the [regulations for research awards of the Humboldt Foundation](#).

Value of the award, purpose of use and support for award winners

The **Max Planck-Humboldt Research Award** honours the entire academic record to date and is endowed with an award money totalling EUR 80,000. In Germany, research awards are generally exempt from income tax under German tax law.

In addition, a sum of EUR 1,500,000 is made available for a period of five years for the purpose of establishing and managing a working group in Germany as well as for other suitable innovative research formats for cooperation with specialist colleagues in Germany. The host institution in Germany receives a lump sum amounting to 20% as markup to the funding amount (administrative flat-rate) to compensate for the material and personnel expenses incurring.

The award winners are integrated into the sponsorship and alumni support through the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's award programmes as well as into support measures of the Max Planck Society.

Provision of award money and proof of use

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Max Planck Society operate the programme jointly. The financing will be managed by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The award money is paid in instalments. The first instalment can be made on request as soon as the award winner has accepted the award and provided the documents required (especially an outline of the project and a financial plan).

Further details of the award winners' obligations in relation to accountability (report on the use of funds) concerning the setup and management of the working group and other information can be found in the [Regulations on the Use of Funds](#), which are available on the [website](#) of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.



General Regulations

The Research Award honours the complete work and the personality of top-flight researchers. This means that it is also taken for granted that the award winners have complied with the relevant [Rules of good scientific practice](#) and relevant laws applicable at the respective research location in the course of their academic work and will also do so during the conduct of the sponsored research. More detailed information can be obtained from the [Information and Recommendations for Award Winners/ Regulations on the Use of Funds](#).

As of January 2025