Welcome Centres for internationally mobile researchers

Programme promoting the international competitiveness and appeal of universities in Germany

3rd round

Programme Information

I. Welcome Centres for internationally mobile researchers

In 2006, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft and the Deutsche Telekom Foundation designed a joint programme, the “Welcome Centres for internationally mobile researchers”, to strengthen the international competitiveness and appeal of Germany’s universities. The objective of this best-practice competition is to encourage German universities to build and further develop effective structures for optimal support of internationally mobile researchers and their families.

Two successful rounds of the competition so far have raised awareness that these newly established support structures for guest researchers play a significant role in the universities' strategies for internationalisation, and have brought them a clear competitive advantage internationally. In the meantime, numerous universities have started to build their own “Welcome Centres” or similar structures even without funding from this programme. This third and last call for applications builds on this success.

The third round addresses universities that have already developed successful support structures for internationally mobile researchers, regardless of whether they call them “Welcome Centres” or something else. We are seeking concepts that take these achievements to a new level; ideas that can make the current Welcome Centre one of the best of its kind worldwide. Universities are asked to illustrate the special aspects and achievements of their existing support structures for internationally mobile researchers, as well as provide an outlook on planned future developments (as opposed to rounds 1 and 2, when we asked for planned structures and services at “Welcome Centres” that were yet to be established).

II. Award, amount and use of funding

A jury will select up to ten applications for an award from among all submissions. With this award, the university earns the right to use the title “Welcome Centre for internationally mobile researchers” as well as the visual material relating to the competition for its own marketing purposes. The winning universities will also be featured on the website www.welcome-centres.de and be continuously involved in the activities of the European EURAXESS network, the German section of which is coordinated by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The winning universities will receive financial recognition in the form of a monetary award totalling 10,000 EUR, which may be used for the planned development of their Welcome Centre as

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described in the concept. The award ceremony will take place in January 2011 at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation’s New Year’s Reception in Berlin.

The award money will be transferred in January 2011; the funds must be used in the calendar year 2011. A final report and documentation on the use of funds is due in December 2011 (see requirements in the “application form”).

III. Application requirements

1. Universities and universities of technology in Germany employing internationally mobile researchers are eligible to apply. “Internationally mobile” usually refers to researchers from abroad working at a university or university of technology in Germany on a fixed-term or open-ended contract (“incoming”) as well as researchers from Germany going abroad (“outgoing”) or coming back from abroad (“returning”). “Researchers” are defined as those who have reached the post-doctoral career-stage upwards. Doctoral candidates can only be included in exceptional cases and may not be the main target group.

2. Universities that were selected for funding in the first and second round are excluded from participating in the third round. Universities which received an honourable mention in the second round may participate in the third round.

3. Any university that submits an application and/or wins an award authorises the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation to make the special aspects and achievements of its project available to the public and agrees that its ideas may be emulated.

IV. Application procedure

1. Applicants must submit a concept, using the enclosed application form, and not exceeding 5 pages.

2. The concept must be emphatically supported by the administration of the respective university.

3. The complete application (application form and concept) must reach the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation by 1 July 2010. This deadline is not exclusive, but it may not be possible to process applications which arrive late or incomplete (Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Div. 1.3, ref.: Welcome Centres, Jean-Paul-Str. 12, 53173 Bonn, Germany).

4. A jury will evaluate complete applications and decide on awards.

5. There is no right of appeal.

1 Non-university research institutions and universities of applied sciences are not eligible to participate. Universities may, however, submit applications that involve the collaboration of non-university research institutions and universities.

2 e.g. new professorial appointments from abroad, guest researchers, guest professors, fellows at post-doctoral level.

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