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Programme Information

Max Planck Research Award

**International Research Award
of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Max Planck Society**

Deadline for nominations: 15 January 2016

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Max Planck Society jointly confer the Max Planck Research Award, which is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, on exceptionally qualified foreign and German scientists who have already achieved international recognition and are expected to continue to produce outstanding academic results in international collaborations – not least with the assistance of this award.

The call for nominations rotates on an annual basis between partial fields within the natural and engineering sciences, the life sciences and the humanities. The Max Planck Society and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation choose partial fields in order to give additional impetus to disciplines which have not yet established themselves in Germany or which should be developed further.

The Max Planck Research Award 2016 will be conferred in the area of life sciences in the subject

Organismal Biology with particular focus on sensing the environment

Reductionist approaches in biology have enabled a deep understanding of physiological processes and the underlying molecular mechanisms and structures. Recent conceptual and methodological advances in life sciences increasingly led to a more systemic approach, posing new challenges of interdisciplinary research and the bridging of scales from the molecular to the organismic level. Organismal biology aims at an integration of this entire spectrum of biological investigation. This research will be required to understand life at all levels from cells and tissues to organisms and their performance, eventually to address questions of both ecology and evolution. The Max Planck Research Award will be conferred to individuals who conduct outstanding interdisciplinary research at the forefront of organismal biology, with a particular focus on sensing the environment.

Two research awards are to be conferred on internationally renowned scientific researchers every year: One to a researcher working abroad and the other to a researcher working in Germany. Nominations of qualified **female scientists** are especially welcome.

Nomination Entitlement

The nominations have to be initiated in Germany.

The following are entitled to submit nominations:

- The rectors/ presidents of all scientific universities in Germany,
- The presidents of the following research organizations and (where applicable) scientific heads of institutes of these organizations in Germany:
 - Academies of Sciences,
 - Fraunhofer Society,
 - Hermann von Helmholtz Association of National Research Centres,
 - Max Planck Society,
 - German Academy of Science and Engineering,
 - National Academy of Sciences /German Academy of Natural Scientists Leopoldina,
 - Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Association,
 - Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin,
- previous recipients of the following awards working in Germany
 - of the German Research Foundation's Leibniz Award,
 - of the Max Planck Research Award,
 - of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's Wolfgang Paul Award,
 - of the Alexander von Humboldt Professorship
- members of the DFG's Review Boards in closely related disciplines
- the scientific members of the selection committees of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

Prerequisites for a nomination

The nominee's outstanding academic qualification must be internationally recognised and documented by corresponding successes in research, such as positively received academic publications or previous awards.

Researchers can be honored only once with the Max Planck Research Award. It is not possible to nominate oneself.

Selection procedure

The nominations must be submitted to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation:

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

Selection Department
Jean-Paul-Strasse 12
53173 Bonn / Germany

Please use only the current nomination documents for the nomination. These can be downloaded from the website of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation at <http://www.humboldt-foundation.de>.

Further information concerning the selection process can be found on the website of the Humboldt Foundation and in the document "[Information for a complete nomination](#)".

Please submit the complete nomination documents to the Administrative Headquarters of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation by **15 January 2016** at the latest. This deadline for submissions is not a final deadline, but it may not be possible to consider nominations received after the deadline or those which are incomplete.

A joint, independent selection committee from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the Max Planck Society decides on the award winners and the value of the award. The award is conferred by the Presidents of the Max Planck Society and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation under the auspices of the Federal Ministry for Education and Research.

Award money, use of funds and support of award winners

The Max Planck Research Award is usually endowed with EUR 750,000. It is made available over a period of three to a maximum of five years for recipients to pursue research of their own choosing.

The award is intended to finance the award winner's academic work and it may be used for all purposes directly related to this research – with the objective of initiating and carrying out research work with partners in Germany and abroad. A significant proportion of the award money is intended to be used to integrate students and junior scientists from abroad and Germany into the research work funded by the Max Planck Research Award. Up to 20% of the funds (up to EUR 10,000 per month) may be used to cover the award winner's living expenses during a research stay in Germany (for award winners from abroad) or abroad (for award winners from Germany). In Germany, this remuneration must be taxed according to income tax law; abroad, the relevant legal provisions apply. Over and above this, the award money or parts thereof may not be used for the award winner's personal income. Up to 20% of the award money may be used for purchasing equipment.

The home institutions at which the recipients of the award carry out their research work, or the institutions entrusted with the administration of award funds, can receive a lump-sum (15% in total, as a rule) from the award money granted to the award winners (administrative lump-sum) as compensation for all the costs incurred as a result of the award-related use of existing and/or specially procured material or personnel infrastructure (e.g. general facilities of the institute, laboratories/workrooms, operational and maintenance costs, financial and personnel management, auditing).

The award winners are integrated into the support and alumni support programmes through the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's Award Winners' Programmes and into specific support measures run by 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. If an award is granted, the financing will be managed by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The award money is paid in installments. The first installment can be made on call as soon as the award winner has accepted the award and provided an outline of the project, including a financial plan and details as to the planned research residencies in Germany (for award winners from abroad) or abroad (for award winners from Germany).

Further details of the award winners' obligations in relation to accountability (proof of use of funds) and other information can be found in the Regulations on the Use of Funds pertaining to the Max Planck Research Award programme, which are available on the homepage (<http://www.humboldt-foundation.de>) of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

General Regulations

The Research Award honors the complete work and the personality of top-flight researchers. This means that it is also taken for granted among other things 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.

Updated: 8/2015