

## Information

### **Submission of a proposal for the Junior Research Group „Research Quality in and across Disciplines“ (Reference: Rf. 312) of the Objective 3 – Advancing Research Quality and Value of the Berlin University Alliance**

#### **I. Aim**

The funding is aimed at outstanding early-career researchers in the natural sciences, life sciences, engineering, social sciences, and humanities. Within the framework of a four-year junior research group, they will be given the opportunity to develop and implement their own research project on a topic in the field of research quality or related topics such as “Open Science” or “Responsible Research and Innovation.” A particular focus is directed at the strengthening of structures and processes of the partner institutions of the Berlin University Alliance, which, as a new compound in the German-speaking area provides a theoretical and empirical framework for several institutions. Against this background, the Junior Research Group to be funded will have to develop adequate and complementary measures for the continuous safeguarding and improvement of research quality at the Alliance’s institutions and beyond.

#### **II. Content**

The junior research group’s works are to reflect the diverse aspects of the subject: Universal demands for improving “the” research quality at scientific institutions sometimes convey the impression that there is a uniform understanding of research quality that needs to be met. Nevertheless, one of the central insights of previous research seems to be that standards of research work are essentially shaped by disciplinary cultures and are thus dependent on disciplinary practices. The junior research group aims to contribute to the creation of a theoretical as well as empirical basis that allows to make the multi-layered construct of research quality tangible against the background of the tension between universalism and particularism by identifying relevant dimensions of research quality and developing and operationalizing criteria for their analysis and assessment. The aim is to use this as a basis for developing quality assurance processes and standards for research that serve to ensure a sustainable research quality, taking into account disciplinary specifics, and also to support the establishment of an error culture.

Against this background, the junior research group will:

- contribute to the understanding of research quality and the exploration of practices, infrastructures, and processes by which disciplines deal with research quality issues and conflicts (e.g., initiatives to fund replication studies or the development of teaching materials).
- integrate especially qualitative or mixed-method approaches when working on the research project and at the same time contribute to the methodological reflection of the research field.
- the research topic of the junior research group should go beyond basic research and have or establish an application reference, i.e., the transfer and implementation of the findings into university or research practice should be considered from the beginning in the research design.

The junior research group is to be established at one of the partner institutions of the Berlin University Alliance whose profile can make a substantial contribution to the general topic of the group as well as to the specific research project. The receiving institution must provide evidence in a cover letter that the

junior research group will be integrated into the institution's research program in terms of structure and content

The group leader designs the project independently and assumes responsibility for the professional management of the group.

In agreement with the supervising institution, the head of the research group should assume the supervision of the doctoral candidates assigned to it. In the cover letter of the receiving institution, it must be stated to what extent the group leader will be given the opportunity to guide doctoral candidates from the junior research group to doctoral studies. If it is not possible to transfer the right to award doctoral degrees to the group leader, it must be explained in detail how supervision will be ensured.

Where possible, the gender ratio within the research group should be balanced.

### **III. Pre-requisites / Eligibility for application**

The Junior Research Group's call for proposals is aimed at outstanding researchers with a doctorate who would like to establish a junior research group in the field of research quality and open science, affiliated with a partner institution of the BUA. The junior research group leader is employed at the institution with which the junior research group leader is affiliated. Employment is for a period of 4 years and 2 months. The employment relationships of the junior research group leaders are contractually agreed as guest lectureships and include a teaching obligation.

Researchers with a doctorate whose degree was awarded no more than 4 years ago are eligible. Deviations from this threshold are possible in exceptional cases (childcare or nursing periods, professional activity outside the research sector)

Researchers who have already completed their habilitation cannot be considered; the same applies to researchers who are already supported by another funding organization as junior research group leaders (e.g., DFG Emmy Noether Program, ERC Grants, Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, BMBF*)).

Applicants must include a Letter of Intent (LoI) from the institution where the group is to be located (depending on responsibility, department/faculty/institute/campus). This institution must be part of a partner institution of the BUA. The following aspects are to be addressed in this LoI:

- Assurance of support for the junior research group leader in all project-related matters as well as the work opportunities required for the implementation of the project (premises, access to research literature and infrastructure, access to further education opportunities, etc.); statement of the extent to which the junior research group will be integrated into the research program of the institution in terms of structure and content.
- Explanation of whether the junior research group leader is given the opportunity to guide doctoral candidates from the junior research group to the doctorate or presentation of how supervision is guaranteed as an alternative. Demonstration of how doctoral students will continue to be supervised should the junior research group leader leave the institution before the end of the funding period.

Fundable costs:

1. Lump sum for position of junior research group leader based on TV-L EG 14/15. Job share 100 %, incl. compensation for VBL-benefits. Compensation is based on the rules of the institution with which the junior research group is affiliated.

## 2. Staffing of the junior research group

Research assistant [1.5 FTE] (pre- or postdoc level)

Employment of personnel shall be in accordance with the specifications of the receiving institution. Research assistants have regular teaching responsibilities. Upon request and subject to available funds, up to 0.5 FTE administrative staff may be applied for.

## 3. Material costs can be applied for as follows:

A lump sum of 20,000 euros per year is available to the junior research group for material costs, e.g., for travel and accommodation expenses for the academic staff, smaller equipment and soft-ware, publications, and other material costs (contract awards, funds for further training, etc.). The funds are managed in accordance with the budgetary requirements of the State of Berlin.

Personnel and material costs (2 and 3) are eligible for cover.

**The following documents need to be submitted** (please use the templates provided on the website of the Objective 3):

<https://www.berlin-university-alliance.de/en/commitments/research-quality/jrg-disciplines/index.html>

- Proposal with a maximum of 15 pages (font size 11, Arial with a minimum line spacing of 1,15 x).
  - Please confer section 6.3 of the call for the structuring of your proposal
- Financing plan (please use the template “budget” on the website of the Objective 3)
  - For the remuneration of the staff, please use the personnel rates of the German Research Foundation: [https://www.dfg.de/formulare/60\\_12/60\\_12\\_en.pdf](https://www.dfg.de/formulare/60_12/60_12_en.pdf)
- CV of the group leader (please use the template “CV” on the website of the Objective 3) including:
  - publication list highlighting the ten most relevant publications
  - research data generated and published
  - details of relevant research projects
- Detailed statement of the receiving institution (Letter of Intent)
  - Please conf. call junior research group “Research Quality in and across Disciplines”, section 6.3 / 4.3. for more detailed information on the draft of the LOI
- If applicable: Letter(s) of support of the affiliated institution(s) of the Berlin University Alliance
- Draft of job offer for the positions of doctoral candidates / postdoctoral researchers
- Other supporting documents / references / letters of intent

**Application deadline is 1 August 2021**

For any questions concerning the call, please contact the CORE team (Dr. Sybille Hinze, Head of CORE; Dr. Stefan Skupien, Scientific Coordinator Open Science; Nele Albrecht, Scientific Coordinator Research Quality) at:

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