



FAQs – Guidelines and hints for the

Pre-Doc Award 2019

Application

Who can apply?

Graduate students (hereafter candidates) having excellent academic records and whose final exams (date of degree / certificate) date back no longer than eight months may apply. It is mandatory to have a postdoc researcher as a supervising partner associated to the position (hereafter supervisor). The application shall be submitted in a joint-effort.

Can I apply without a postdoc?

Unfortunately not.

Is it necessary for the proposed postdoc to have the right to supervise dissertations?

No, because the faculties at Leipzig University have differing criteria for determining who can supervise a doctorate.

What are the requirements and needed documents for an application?

The candidate must have a university degree and submit an application including the following documents by the date and to the contact address outlined in the call:

- 1) Jointly written statement by the Pre-Doc candidate and postdoc summarizing the objectives of the projects and detailing their working relationship, preferably in English language.
- 2) Project proposal in English language (maximum of 3 written pages, Arial or similar, font size 10, 1,5 line space), including (1) hypothesis, (2) detailing of potential results, (3) work schedule including milestone plan and timeline, (demonstrating feasibility), (4) work packages, (5) prospectus, including potential measures for securing funding for the doctoral project as concrete as possible. There is no template for the proposal.
- 3) CV of the candidate
- 4) CV of the postdoc
- 5) List of publications of the postdoc (and, if applicable, of the Pre-Doc candidate)
- 6) Certificate of completion of studies (degree) of the candidate
- 7) A signed statement from the potential faculty supervisor(s) acknowledging the support of the candidate's pursuit of doctoral studies and of the proposed project spearheaded by the postdoc.

Am I eligible to apply as a candidate if my graduation was more than eight months prior to the time of application?

Yes, this is not grounds for disqualification. However, the Pre-Doc Award does not represent “re-entry funding”. A well-developed project proposal and a cover letter explaining the reasons for the delay are required.

Can I apply as a candidate if I am already on the doctoral candidate list of a faculty?

No. If a candidate is already on the doctoral candidate list of a faculty, then he/she no longer has the status of “pre-doc”.

May candidates apply that have acquired their degree outside of Leipzig University?

Yes. The goal is to start a PhD project at Leipzig University. The supervisor should work at Leipzig University and the candidate should gain acceptance to a doctoral candidate list of a faculty at Leipzig University.

How much detail should the application include on the plan for acquiring third-party funding?

The plan should include as much detail as possible, since it is critical that the selection committee will be convinced of the seriousness of the proposed project. To outline steps and ideas about where and when to apply for third party funding is almost as important for this Pre-Doc Award programme as the planned research itself.

Can the application still be considered if it is missing the signed statement from the supervisor acknowledging support of the candidate’s pursuit of doctoral studies and of the proposed project?

Yes. Ideally, the signed statement should be included with the application. However, if the statement cannot be obtained by the deadline, it is okay to submit the application without it. The signed statement must be received no later than January 15, 2019.

For candidates submitting after December 16, 2018, the signed statement shall be submitted together with the other documents no later than January 27, 2019.

Evaluation

What are the evaluation criteria?

Evaluation criteria are qualification of the candidate, the fit of the collaboration of postdoc and candidate, the scientific quality of the proposed research and the potential for acquiring future funding for the candidate.

Who is evaluating the applications?

The Vice-Rector for Research and Young Academics will appoint a selection committee, which will decide on the projects to be funded. The committee will include:

- the Vice-Rector for Research and Young Academics
- the referent of the Vice-Rector for Research and Young Academics
- three representatives from the Research Commission
- the Managing Director of the Research Academy Leipzig
- the referent for academic staff development of the Research Academy Leipzig
- a representative of the Department of Research Services
- the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity
- if applicable, the representative for Employees with Disabilities

Implementation

What exactly are the funding terms and administrative steps to be taken for receiving them?

Funding for the Pre-Doc Award will be equivalent to a WHK position at 19 hour per week for 12 months.

Consequently, the candidate will be employed by Leipzig University.

Prior to the employment, the employing institution will have to hand in a “request for employment” (ANTRAG auf Einstellung einer Hilfskraft an der Universität Leipzig) signed by the head of the institution. This form can be found in the [intranet](#). On the front page of the form „Pre-Doc Award 2019“ shall be noted. The form shall be amended by the “Anlage „Begründung für Befristungen nach dem WissZeitVG“. Further information will be provided after evaluation of the applications and selection of funded awardees.

The Department of Finances and Human Resources will carry out all administrative handling.

Your contact person for related questions will be:

Jenny Heber

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<http://www.uni-leipzig.de/intranet/zentralverwaltung/finanzen-und-personal/sachgebiet-35/arbeits-und-tarifrecht.html>

Sprechzeiten/consultation hours (also for contract signing):

Di/Tue 9.00 – 12.00 a.m. & 13.00 – 17.00 p.m. & Do/Thu 9.00 – 12.00 a.m.

6. Etage/ Zi. 630 – 6th floor / room 630

What is the Pre-Doc Award Programme timeline?

Applications in a first round were accepted until December 14, 2018; as a result, the deadline was extended until January 27, 2019. In the 2nd half of December and end of January 2019, the selection committee will evaluate the project proposals and applications. Notification of the evaluation result will be given by the end of January 2019. The administrative steps to prepare for the employment are to be taken in February. Start of the programme for all collaborative projects shall be no later than March 15th and March 1st 2019, where feasible.

What is expected of candidates in case of Pre-Doc award granting?

(1)

Candidates —supervised by a postdoc —shall develop a doctoral project and prepare an application for a doctoral scholarship during the funding period.

Or

The participating postdoc— in collaboration with the candidate and based on the doctoral project— shall obtain third-party funding, ideally as the Principle Investigator (PI) of a project that also secures funding for the candidate.

(2)

Candidates and supervising postdocs shall participate in the Pre-Doc Award events and networking activities, particularly:

- Kick-Off Event for the Pre-Doc Award 2019 (half day; likewise March 2019 at Villa Tillmanns)
- Workshop about Grant Writing (obligatory for Pre-Doc Candidates and voluntary for supervising postdocs)
- Peer-Networking and Discussion meetings for the participants (conceptualisation in a joint-process with the participants; either as a whole group or separate for Pre-Docs and postdocs; monthly, quarterly or bi-annually, likely 90 minutes each)
- Final Symposium (1 day; likewise January or February 2020)

(3)

Candidates and supervising postdocs shall support the public relations for the Pre-Doc Award by providing related information for respective channels, e.g. the Research Academy Website and Leipzig University’s staff magazine LUMAG.

(4)

Candidates and supervising postdocs shall participate reliably in the Pre-Doc Award evaluation.

(5)

Candidates and supervising postdocs shall inform the coordinating office of the Pre-Doc Award at the Research Academy Leipzig in case of any relevant change of contact data or employment status.

Further information

What else shall be considered?

(1)

The language of the Pre-Doc Award programme is English. Applications shall be as complete as possible in English language. The same applies for all communication and related material (website texts etc.). Furthermore, the accompanying workshops and events will be held in English.

Is it possible to receive an increase in the Pre-Doc Award for the reward period?

Yes, in principle, it is possible for the Pre-Doc Award to be increased to 1.0 FTE (full time equivalent) by way of third-party funding. In this case, a short and informal written explication of the involved postdoc is required. However, as the primary aim of the Pre-Doc Award programme is preparing a successful funding application, this option is not preferred and the PhD preparation phase should not be compromised. To secure the doctorate preparation phase, the supervisor and the holder of the Pre-Doc Award agree on further details in a supplementary agreement in case of an increase.

Who are your contact persons?

The Pre-Doc Award is coordinated by the research Academy of Leipzig. Responsible for the programme is the Vice Rector for Research and Young Academics, Prof. Dr. Erich Schröger. He has assigned Dr. Nicole Koburger, referent for academic staff development at the Research Academy Leipzig to coordinate the programme. A supporting graduate assistant will be employed to support the coordination and communication of the programme.

The contact details are:

Vice Rectorate for Research and Young Scientists

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