

Berlin, October 16, 2024

PROGRAM INFORMATION

VISITING FELLOWS 2025

1. Preamble

Stiftung Charité offers a wide range of funding programs to attract exciting personalities and renowned researchers for the life sciences in Berlin – both permanent recruitments and the temporary integration of visiting scientists. With the Visiting Fellows, Stiftung Charité provides funding for established or leading researchers from abroad or from other locations in Germany to stay in Berlin at Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin (including Berlin Institute of Health @ Charité (BIH) and German Heart Center Berlin (DHZC)) or at Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine (MDC) temporarily and, optionally, to set up their own research group. With their experience and expertise as well as their research ideas, the Visiting Fellows provide important impulses for the Berlin life sciences ecosystem. In this way, Stiftung Charité would like to contribute both to the strengthening and to the international and national interconnectivity of the Berlin life sciences field. Additionally, with regard to the Visiting Fellows, Stiftung Charité would like to foster diversity at the location, in particular with regard to gender, origin and age.

2. Funding objectives

Visiting Fellows are established or leading researchers¹ at universities, research institutes and research-based companies who come to Berlin for longer guest visits at Charité (incl. BIH and DHZC) or MDC in order to develop a larger, joint research project with their hosts on site and, possibly, to set up their own research group. The visits can also serve to mentor an individual junior researcher at the host institution. The funding is also explicitly intended to provide seed financing for promising new research foci and thus to strategically prepare strong scientific collaborative projects and alliances capable of receiving third-party funding. In addition, with regard to the Visiting Fellows, the diversity at the location, in particular with regard to gender, origin, internationality and age, is to be strengthened.

The program includes three different funding options depending on the objective and maturity of the project as well as the involvement of the Visiting Fellow:

- Track A: Funding of the Visiting Fellow to develop a project idea and design
- Track B: Funding of the Visiting Fellow and seed funding for a research group to design and implement a pilot phase of the project

¹ based on "R3" and "R4" career levels according to the European Commission's definition. Cf. European Commission: Towards a European Framework for Research Careers. Brussels 2011. [Hyperlink](#)

- Track C: Funding of the Visiting Fellow and funding for a research group to conduct the project

3. Funding volume

Depending on the track, Stiftung Charité provides funding for Visiting Fellows to the following extent:

Track A		Track B		Track C	
Funding volume					
Funding of the Visiting Fellow to develop a project idea and design		Funding of the Visiting Fellow and seed funding for a research group to design and implement a pilot phase of the project		Funding of the Visiting Fellow and funding for a research group to conduct the project	
Funding duration					
Fellow	Research group	Fellow	Research group	Fellow	Research group
1 to max. 3 years	./.	1 to max. 3 years	1 to max. 2 years	2 to max. 3 years	2 to max. 3 years
Funding amount					
Fellow	Research group	Fellow	Research group	Fellow	Research group
Max. 50,000.00 euros p.a.	./.	Max. 50,000.00 euros p.a.	Max. 100,000.00 euros p.a.	Max. 50,000.00 euros p.a.	Max. 150,000.00 euros p.a.
Max. 50,000.00 euros p.a. (Max. 150,000.00 euros in total)		Max. 150,000.00 euros p.a. (Max. 350,000.00 euros in total)		Max. 200,000.00 euros p.a. (Max. 600,000.00 euros in total)	

Applications are submitted for one specific track and will be reviewed respectively (see 6 "Proposal and assessment criteria"). In any case, it is expected that the Visiting Fellow and the host will continue the project and, if applicable, the research group at an early stage by raising other funds and developing it into a collaborative project with substantial third-party funding.

The Visiting Fellows may use the designation "Visiting Fellow, funded by Stiftung Charité" for the duration of their funding.

Provided that the respective requirements are met, the Visiting Fellows are also to be integrated into their institution as *Gastprofessorinnen* and *Gastprofessoren* in accordance with the state higher education regulations.

4. Application of funds

Funding may consist of

- a) an appropriate expense allowance/remuneration for the Visiting Fellow according to the rules of the host institution and based on the qualification and position of the Fellow in the home country of up to 50,000.00 euros per year; as well as only in Track B and C
- b) personnel funds for the members of the research group to be established and
- c) material funds for the research project of the research group (in Track B a total of up to 100,000.00 euros per year; in Track C a total of up to 150,000.00 euros per year).

In cases to be justified in the application, the funds for the remuneration of the Visiting Fellow (see 4a) may also be used for material resources or for personnel resources for the employment of staff, provided that the Visiting Fellow's work stays can be ensured otherwise. Reallocation of funds after the start of funding is also possible with appropriate justification.

The Charité (incl. BIH and DHZC) or the MDC guarantees to provide suitable workplaces, including the necessary infrastructure, for the Visiting Fellow and, if applicable, for all members of the research group.

There are no contractual relationships between Stiftung Charité and the Visiting Fellow. All necessary arrangements are to be made directly between the host and the Visiting Fellow.

Funding from Stiftung Charité is provided as a lump sum to the Charité (incl. BIH and DHZC) or to the MDC. The host at Charité (incl. BIH and DHZC) or at MDC will arrange the exact procedure for remuneration with the Visiting Fellow and his or her home institution. It is conceivable that the home institution will continue to pay the existing remuneration to the Visiting Fellow and the host will pay a reimbursement to the home institution, or that the Visiting Fellow will take a leave of absence from the home institution and the host will pay the Visiting Fellow's remuneration (e.g. honorarium or stipend) to him or her directly. The use of material and travel funds is based on the rules of the host institution. No contractual relationship is established between Stiftung Charité and the Visiting Fellow.

5. Eligibility requirements

Researchers who are either members of the Executive Board of Charité (incl. BIH and DHZC) or MDC or who head a center, an institute, a clinic or a research group there are eligible to apply. Other persons at Charité (incl. BIH and DHZC) or MDC may act as co-applicants.

Applications are submitted by the host for the nominated Visiting Fellow and are prepared jointly with him or her.

The nominated Visiting Fellow must be an established or leading researcher² in the respective life sciences field. He or she should be able to demonstrate appropriate scientific experience and success, whereby, in addition to the usual achievements in research and teaching, explicit achievements in knowledge and technology transfer or establishment of scientific infrastructures will be given equal consideration. The nominated Visiting Fellow may work in Germany or abroad at a university, a research institute or a research-based company. The nomination of Visiting Fellows who are active in private-sector research and development is expressly encouraged.

6. Proposal and assessment criteria

The application is submitted for one specific track and consists of

- (a) information on the nominated Visiting Fellow and his or her scientific qualifications and achievements (incl. CV and a selected list of the five own publications most relevant to the project; no complete publication list may be submitted); it must be demonstrated that the nominated Visiting Fellow has the scientific qualifications required for an established or leading researcher; equal consideration will be given to achievements in research, teaching, knowledge, technology transfer and establishment of scientific infrastructures,
- (b) information on the host (CV and a selected publication list; no complete publication list may be submitted)
- (c) project description, including information on the following aspects:
 - motives, topics, relevance as well as scientific and strategic goals of the project
 - current state of research and development: positioning of the project in its international research context and description of preliminary work; the application itself must be comprehensible without reference to cited or attached literature
 - significance and added value of the Visiting Fellow to the host institution, its national and international collaborative network and strategic focus
 - degree of maturity of existing or to be developed collaborations between the host institution, the Visiting Fellow and his or her home institution and, if applicable, other partners, as well as planned measures to integrate the Visiting Fellow into the Berlin life sciences ecosystem
 - potential and perspectives of the project, especially with regard to submit an application for competitive third-party funds from larger funding organizations such as the German Research Foundation (DFG) or the European Research Council (ERC)
 - work and time schedule (incl. the planned visit(s) to Berlin)

² based on "R3" and "R4" career levels according to the European Commission's definition. Cf. European Commission: Towards a European Framework for Research Careers. Brussels 2011. [Hyperlink](#)

- in case of mentioning mentoring: information about the junior researcher being the mentee (CV, list and – if possible – copies of the five most important publications at own discretion)
- only in case of applying for Track B or C: description of the topic and size of the planned research group in Berlin including information on the tasks to be performed by the research group members funded by the Stiftung Charité
- details of ethical aspects (if applicable)
- in case of mentioning co-applicants or cooperation partners, please submit declarations of intent issued by them and addressing the planned cooperation

(d) budget plan

(e) confirmation issued by the host about providing the workspace and the necessary infrastructure.

The applications are evaluated both at the level of the person of the nominated Visiting Fellow with regard to his or her scientific qualifications and achievements (research, teaching, knowledge, technology transfer and establishment of scientific infrastructures) and at the level of the project with regard to quality, potential for continuation and added value for the Berlin life sciences. The appropriateness of the proposed funding track is also evaluated in terms of funding amount and duration as well as degree of maturity. Higher requirements are placed on an application in Track B than in Track A. An application in Track C is again subject to higher requirements than in Track B. During the evaluation, funding in another track may be recommended and decided.

The Visiting Fellow is expected to come to Berlin at least three times a year for multi-week stays or at least one time per year for a multi-month stay. In addition to the physical visits, plans for remote collaboration can also be outlined.

The funding is also explicitly intended to serve as seed financing for promising new research priorities and thus for the strategic preparation of new collaborative relationships and strong scientific alliances capable of receiving third-party funding. In all three tracks, it is expected that at the end of the funding by Stiftung Charité, an application will be submitted for the acquisition of competitively awarded third-party funds from large funding organizations, such as DFG or ERC.

Please submit your applications via the [online portal](#). A document with instructions on how to apply via the online portal can be found [here](#).

By submitting an application, the applicant declares that he or she has read Stiftung Charité's grant conditions ([Bewilligungsgrundsätze](#)) as well as the program information of the program to which his or her application refers and accepts them as the legally binding basis for any funding of his or her project. Furthermore, the applicant acknowledges Stiftung Charité's [standards for the realization of funded projects](#) and data protection information ([Datenschutzhinweise](#)).

7. Selection procedure

Applications are submitted to Stiftung Charité, where they are reviewed for form. Formally admissible applications are passed on to a selection panel appointed by Stiftung Charité, which is composed of external life scientists, representatives from other funding institutions and representatives from potential host institutions. The panel evaluates the eligibility of the proposed projects guided by the criteria detailed above and makes funding recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Stiftung Charité's Board of Trustees makes the final funding decisions.

8. Deadlines / dates

February 24, 2025, 11.59 pm	Application deadline
End of May 2025	Announcement of funding decisions
June 1, 2025	Earliest possible start of funding

9. Contact

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