



Fachbereich  
Biologie, Chemie, Pharmazie  
Graduate Center

# Rising-Star-Fellowship of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy Freie Universität Berlin

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## Guidelines and Information

# GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION ON RISING-STAR-FELLOWSHIPS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHARMACY

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## FOREWORD

The Rising Star Fellowship Program of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy seeks to attract outstanding early-career researchers who have completed their doctorates within the last four years - preferably from abroad.

The Rising Star fellows will take part in the research activities of their host-research groups, will be absorbed into existing research networks (CRCs, BBIB, research training groups, etc.) and will publish their results together with them.

The payment of the fellowship and the additional benefits is subject to the availability of budgetary funds.

The approvals of the fellowships are decided by the Dean's Office. The coordination and processing of applications is managed by the Graduate Center of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy.

The following guidelines and information apply to all fellowship holders within the framework of the Rising Star Program of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy of Freie Universität Berlin.

## **A. GUIDELINES OF THE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

### **A.1. The research fellowship**

The fellowship is awarded for the purpose of carrying out the research project at the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy of Freie Universität (FU) Berlin, as requested by the recipient and agreed upon with the host research group(s). By accepting the research fellowship, the fellows undertake to devote themselves fully to the purpose of the fellowship during the funding period. The pursuit of other full-time activities in or outside Germany is not possible during the period of support by a research fellowship of the FU. For details see under A1.9

#### **A.1.1. Acceptance**

A declaration of fellowship acceptance is attached to the documents concerning the award of the research fellowship (approval notification). This declaration should be completed and signed in original and returned to Freie Universität as soon as possible, but at the latest within four weeks after receipt of the notice of award.

#### **A.1.2. Starting date**

The date for the start of the fellowship funding must have been agreed with the host research group at the time the declaration of acceptance is returned to Freie Universität Berlin.

#### **A.1.3. Time period**

The research fellowship is granted for a maximum of two years.

#### **A.1.4. Extension**

If the funded research project cannot be brought to a meaningful completion within the available time period, an extension is possible upon application, stating the reasons. The Dean's Office of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy decides on extension requests, taking into account the scientific necessity and the available budget. An extension cannot be granted to work on a new research project or a continuing topic resulting from the original research project. An application to this effect should be submitted to the Dean's Office via the Graduate Center 3 to 4 months before the end of the research fellowship funding.

An extension can be requested for individual months as needed. The granting of long-term extensions is not always possible, even for scientifically justified applications, and not to the full extent, because the financial possibilities are limited.

The following documents must be attached to the application for extension:

- A report on the research conducted to date and planned during the requested extension period. This report should present the results of the research to date and explain in more detail the reasons for the need for an extension.
- Documents proofing the research to date, e.g. offprints of previously published research results, manuscripts or abstracts of lectures, preprints, etc.
- A statement and a renewed research place and supervision commitment from the host research group(s). The host(s) should evaluate the research results achieved so far and justify the necessity of the extension. It is the responsibility of the research fellows to arrange for the statement as well as the renewed research place and supervision commitment of the host research group(s).

### **A.1.5. Research fellowship amount**

The amount of the research fellowship is 2,500 Euros per month.

### **A.1.6. Fellowship payments**

The monthly payments of the research fellowship are usually transferred to a **private bank account** (current account) in the [SEPA](#) (Single Euro Payments Area) area on the 15th of the month.

All research fellows who do not have a private bank account in the SEPA area must open an appropriate bank account as soon as possible.

In principle, there is no entitlement to the monthly fellowship amount if research fellows are absent from the host institute for more than a total of 14 days (consecutive or total) during the funding period. In such cases, the Dean's Office reserves the right to reduce the fellowship payments. Conference visits and research, archive and library stays, etc. necessary in connection with the implementation of the research project are not taken into account. Further absences must be approved by the host research group(s) and reported to the Graduate Center (see A 1.9).

At the beginning of the research fellowship - i.e. in the first month - there is an entitlement to the first fellowship payment only in case of arrival by the 15th (or the following working day) of the month. If you arrive later, you are not entitled to the fellowship amount for the current month. In the last month of the research fellowship, attendance is required at least until the 15th of the month. Earlier departure does not entitle you to the fellowship amount for the current month.

### **A.1.7. Additional income**

Research fellows are obliged to inform Freie Universität/the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy about all additional income (salary or income from self-employed and non-self-employed work in Germany, German or foreign fellowships).

Such additional income that exceeds the so-called "Verdienstgrenze für geringfügig Beschäftigte" (earnings limit for marginal employees; currently 450 EUR gross per month) will be counted towards the fellowship amount. Additional employment with income that exceeds the aforementioned "earnings limit for marginal employees" requires the prior approval of Freie Universität. Freie

Universität reserves the right to terminate or interrupt the fellowship in such cases.

The acceptance of another fellowship from German public funds is not permitted.

### **A.1.8. Postponement**

Research fellowships can only be postponed for compelling reasons and not indefinitely. If it is impossible to start the research fellowship on the originally intended date, the Dean's Office requests immediate notification via the Graduate Center so that a new date can be arranged. This new date should in any case be coordinated with the research host(s) or the host institute; approval by the Dean's Office is dependent on the agreement of the research host.

In justified exceptional cases, long-term postponements (usually max. 12 months) are also possible. The decision about a long-term postponement depends on the research project that has been agreed upon with the research host (group/s) again.

### **A.1.9. Interruption**

The research fellowship is awarded for the purpose of carrying out the research project in Germany by the fellows, agreed upon with the host research group(s). It is used to cover living expenses in Germany. By accepting the research fellowship, the research fellows undertake to devote themselves fully to the purpose of the fellowship during the funding period. The pursuit of any other full-time activity in or outside Germany during the funding period by the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy contradicts the purpose of the fellowship and leads to the interruption or termination of the fellowship.

The Dean's Office of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy requires that the research fellows pursue their scientific tasks in Germany for the duration of the research fellowship and are not absent from the host institute for more than a total of 14 days (consecutively or cumulatively). Circumstances that require a longer absence from the host institute (also due to illness) must be reported in writing to the Dean's Office via the Graduate Center. Longer absences from the host institute require the written approval of both the research host(s) and the Dean's Office of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy.

The research fellowship - and thus the payment of the monthly fellowship amounts and additional allowances - will be interrupted in case of

- - longer stays outside Germany,
- - absence from the host institute not approved by the Dean's Office,
- - prolonged illness.

Should an interruption of the research stay be necessary for other reasons, this must be applied for in advance in writing (informally) to the Dean's Office via the Graduate Center of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy, stating the reasons. The application must be accompanied by a written permission of the research host(s).

The Dean's Office is interested in ensuring that the research fellowship is only interrupted for a short time if possible (max. 12 months). If the research fellowship is divided into several partial stays,

the period between the beginning of the first and the end of the last stay in Germany must not exceed 36 months. The decision on a long-term interruption depends on the research project that has been agreed upon again with the research host group(s).

The above also applies to additional benefits within the framework of the research fellowship (*mobility allowance, family allowance for spouses and children, support for single parents, health insurance allowance, research allowance*).

## **A.2. Additional benefits**

In addition to the monthly stipend amounts, the Dean's Office will provide the following benefits if the respective requirements are met:

- Mobility allowance
- Family allowance for spouses
- Child benefit substitution
- Lump sum allowance for single parents
- Health insurance allowance
- Research allowance for the host group

### **A.2.1. Mobility allowance**

The Dean's Office pays the research fellows a monthly mobility allowance of 100 Euros. This amount is intended to cover costs for conferences and research stays. No separate application is required to receive the lump sum. Additional travel or conference support beyond the mobility allowance cannot be granted.

### **A.2.2. Family allowance for spouses**

For spouses who accompany the research fellows to Germany for at least 3 months (without interruption) during the funding period, a family allowance of 276 Euro per month can be granted upon request. A certified copy of the marriage certificate must be submitted to the Dean's Office via the Graduate Center together with the application.

Income of the spouse (salary or income from self-employment and employment in Germany, German or foreign scholarships) that exceeds the so-called "Verdienstgrenze für geringfügig Beschäftigte" (earnings limit for marginal employees; currently 450 EUR gross per month) is counted towards the family allowance.

If you have children younger than 15 months, please note the following:

For children of nationals of the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA) - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus (Greek part), Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland - parental allowance can be applied for during the first 14 months of life according to German law - the Federal Parental Allowance and Parental Leave Act (BEEG). The same applies to accompanying spouses from other countries who stay in Germany with their children for

more than 6 months (without interruption).

In all these cases, the Dean's Office cannot approve a family allowance. If the application for parental allowance is rejected, please contact the Dean's Office via the Graduate Center and submit copies of the rejection notice as well as the residence permit of your spouse. As a rule, Freie Universität can only grant the family allowance if it is confirmed that no parental allowance is or was received under German law for the application period.

The family allowance for spouses is cancelled upon their departure. The Dean's Office must be informed of this via the Graduate Center four weeks in advance if possible. Should the circumstances change on the basis of which a family allowance was granted, the Dean's Office must also be informed immediately via the Graduate Center.

### **A.2.3. Child benefit substitution**

If fellowship holders are accompanied to Germany by children (§ 2 Abs. 1 Ziff. 1 und 2 Bundeskindergeldgesetz BKGG) up to an age of less than 18 years for the duration of at least 3 months (without interruption) during the funding period, a substitute payment for child allowance in the amount of 204 Euro per month can be granted upon application. A certified copy of the birth certificate(s) must be submitted to the Dean's Office via the Graduate Center with the application.

Please note the following:

Nationals of the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA) - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus (Greek part), Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden - and Switzerland can apply for child allowance according to German law - Income Tax Act (EStG) or Federal Child Allowance Act (BKGG). The same applies to research fellows from other countries whose children stay in Germany for more than 6 months (without interruption). In these cases, the Dean's Office cannot approve a substitute payment for the child allowance.

If the application for child benefit is rejected, please contact the Dean's Office and provide copies of the rejection notice and your residence permit. In principle, the Dean's Office can only grant the substitute child benefit if it is confirmed that no child benefit is or was received under German law for the application period.

The substitution for child benefit ceases with the departure of the children. If possible, the Graduate Center must be notified of this four weeks in advance. If there is a change in the circumstances on the basis of which a substitute child benefit was granted, this must also be notified to the Graduate Center immediately.

### **A.2.4. Lump sum allowance for single parents**

If single-parent research fellows are accompanied to Germany by children (§§ 2 Abs. 1 Ziff. 1 und 2 of the Federal Child Benefit Act / Bundeskindergeldgesetz BKGG) up to the age of under 18 years for a period of at least 3 months (without interruption) during the funding period, a lump-sum monthly child allowance may be paid upon written application. For the first child an amount of

400 EUR per month and for each additional child an amount of 100 EUR per month will be granted. A certified copy of the birth certificate(s) must be submitted to the Graduate Center with the application.

### **A.2.5. Health insurance allowance**

The Dean's Office may grant the research fellows an allowance for private (travel) health insurance costs during the funding period. The amount of the allowance is 70 euros per month.

If the circumstances on the basis of which the allowance was granted change, this must also be reported to the Graduate Center immediately.

### **A.2.6. Research allowance for the host group**

The Dean's Office may award a research allowance to the scientific hosts of foreign research fellows on call. The grant is intended to contribute to covering the costs incurred in carrying out the research project, including the project-specific administrative costs. The amount of the research grant is a one-time payment of 800 Euro.

## **A.3. Exploitation of research results - publications, patents, and licenses. Use of the Freie Universität logo**

Freie Universität attaches importance to the publication of the research results achieved within the framework of the funding. In publications and all other, especially all public presentations, reference must be made at an appropriate place to the funding provided by Freie Universität.

Instructions for the use of the Freie Universität Berlin logo can be found on the websites: <https://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/corporate-design/grundlagen/logo/index.html>

### **A.4. Reports**

Shortly after the start of the research fellowship, the Graduate Center asks its grantees for a short interview for presentation on the relevant websites and social media channels of the department.

Freie Universität expects the research results to be reflected in scientific publications, possibly at a later date. In addition, after 18 months, a short report on the work done so far must be given to the Dean's Office via the Graduate Center.

### **A.5. Certificate**

The Graduate Center of the Department of Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy of Freie Universität Berlin will issue a certificate of the research fellowship award to the research fellows at the end of their research period upon request (informal inquiry).