

Appointment Accelerator (Tenure Track & Advanced) – FAQs

Eligibility

Which universities and higher education institutions are eligible to apply?

German universities and educational colleges (Pädagogische Hochschulen) that hold university status are eligible to apply.

Is it possible to apply for funding for an appointment arranged jointly by a university and a non-university institution?

Only German universities and educational colleges (Pädagogische Hochschulen) that hold university status are eligible to apply. A joint application with a publicly funded non-university institute is only possible if an eligible university submits the application and does not transfer more than 49.9% of the funding to the cooperating non-university institute.

Can a university alliance / network submit an application?

Yes, but a single university – the one that will employ the professor – needs to submit the application on behalf of the alliance. The “Relevance for the university” section in the application portal can be used to describe how the candidate will be integrated in the university network.

Can a single university submit multiple applications?

Per call, each university may submit one application per program. However, please contact the head office if you intend to submit multiple applications for a single call or for two consecutive calls.

Candidates

What are the eligibility criteria for researchers?

Universities can submit an application for an international scholar whom they want to appoint to a tenure track professorship (*Tenure Track*) or to a W2/W3 professorship (*Advanced*). The applying university runs a formal check to assess the candidate’s eligibility for the professorship in accordance with the provisions of the relevant federal state law.

Can applications be submitted for German nationals?

Yes, applications can be submitted for candidates with a German passport if they have lived and worked abroad for at least three years at the time of submission. However, the candidate’s international experience and their resulting onboarding needs are factored into the Foundation funding decisions. Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft wants to support researchers with little or no experience with the German academic system. The additional funds are intended to enable universities to meet the specific additional needs of such candidates.

Additional rule for the program variant *Tenure Track*: Candidates must not return to the institution where they obtained their doctorate.

Can applications be submitted for candidates who have successfully applied for a ERC Starting Grant?

Yes. In this case, a shorter decision-making process may be possible as the Foundation would not necessarily need to organize a separate review process but would only have the Experts on International Mobility review the proposed onboarding measures. However, this would require that the original reviews for the ERC Starting Grant application are made available to the Foundation. In such cases, please contact the Foundation's head office.

Can applications be submitted for candidates who are currently Visiting Fellows in Germany?

Yes, provided they are still formally employed at a research institution abroad (even if this post has been put on hold for the term of the fellowship) and provided they had been living and working abroad for at least three years before starting the Fellowship in Germany.

Only for the program variant *Tenure Track*: Can I submit an application for candidates who are currently head of a Starting Group or non-permanent professors with tenure track eligibility?

Yes, if their position is comparable to a tenure-track period, i.e. if the candidate is offered a permanent professorship at the start of their contract. As in tenure-track procedures, their appointment to a permanent professorship may depend on a positive evaluation. Please contact our head office should you have any queries regarding a candidate's eligibility.

When can an application be submitted?

An application can be submitted as soon as a candidate has been selected through the university's processes. This could be as soon as a department, faculty, or senate has approved the selection. Universities that have already made an offer of a professorship may still apply, provided the offer has not yet been accepted.

If a direct appointment (Direktberufung) is planned, an application can be submitted as soon as the candidate has been selected.

Please contact the head office if you are unsure whether a candidate is eligible.

Can I apply if the candidate has already accepted the professorship?

No. At the time of application, the offer must not yet have been accepted.

Funding application and use of funds

How much funding can I apply for?

The maximum funding amount is €400,000 *Tenure Track* or €800,000 *Advanced*. A university can apply for the full amount if it can demonstrate in its application that it will match these funds and make them available exclusively for the professorship. The professor's salary and overheads do not count towards the university's contribution.

Must the university's financial contribution come from internal funds?

No. The university's contribution can include third-party funding.

By when must the funds from the Foundation be used?

In the program variant *Advanced* the maximum funding period is three years; in the program variant *Tenure Track* it is determined by the length of the tenure-track phase (five or six years, depending on the federal state).

How can the funds be used?

You can apply for funding to cover investments, staff and material expenses associated with the professorship as well as dual career and onboarding measures. Investments will only be covered if the application clearly states that they are required solely for the professorship that is the subject of the application. It is not possible to apply for the university contribution to a DFG Major Research Instrumentation application.

Can funding be used to cover staff expenses?

Funding can be used to create posts that benefit the research project directly or to cover costs associated with dual career measures. Please note that research staff funded by Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft must be employed in full-time positions.

The Foundation expects newly hired PhD students to be offered contracts lasting at least four years (*Tenure Track*) or three years (*Advanced*), and expects that postdoctoral contracts will run for at least two years. These rules only apply to positions funded by the Foundation's contributions. Exceptions are possible, with the Foundation's prior agreement, if the university can show that the employee in question has asked for a shorter contract or does not wish to be employed full-time, or if additional sources are being used to fund their position.

Permanent staff positions can also be applied for during the funding period, provided that the positions concerned are assigned to the professorship.

Can I apply for or continue to receive third-party funds from elsewhere if my professorship is funded?

Yes, you may apply for and continue to receive funding from additional sources.

What cannot be covered by the funding?

Funds cannot be used to cover the cost of basic equipment or overheads. The candidate's salary must be fully funded by the university submitting the application. Investments will only be covered if the application clearly states that they are required solely for the professorship that is the subject of the application. It is not possible to apply for the university contribution to a DFG Major Research Instrumentation application.

Onboarding and Dual Career

What is covered by onboarding and which measures can be applied for?

Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft understands "onboarding" to mean all measures that are specifically designed to meet the needs of researchers and to help them settle into their new working and living environment quickly.

Funding for onboarding measures can therefore be used to cover expenses such as relocation costs, temporary accommodation or realtor / estate agent services, one-on-one language courses, services such as personal assistance for dealing with formalities and other administrative tasks, childcare expenses, or dual career measures for the researcher's partner. Equally, these funds can also be used to integrate the researcher into their new professional setting, covering expenses such as one-on-one coaching, mentoring programs, further training, or networking workshops. Please be aware that private funding provided by the Foundation can be used in a much more flexible manner than public funds. Please contact the head office before starting an application to discuss the ways in which you want to support the candidate.

What do I need to keep in mind when applying for onboarding funds?

Funding to cover the cost of realtors / estate agents, temporary accommodation, tax advice, etc. could be regarded as a non-cash monetary advantage for which tax has to be paid – please take this into account when calculating costs. Please contact your university's financial / controlling department early in the process and discuss possible solutions with the Foundation.

What cannot be applied for as onboarding?

All measures that compensate the candidate and their family for the disadvantages caused by the relocation to Germany and the transition into the German academic system are eligible. Please schedule a consultation with the head office before submitting an application to discuss your onboarding measures.

For which dual career measures can the funding be used?

Funding can be used to cover all relevant costs, including career coaching sessions, recruitment agency services, as well as salary expenses for the partner at the applicant's own university or at other research institutions.

How many application rounds are there each year?

There are several application rounds per year. The current deadline can be found on the Foundation's website.

Can I also submit applications in German?

No. Applications may be submitted in English only.

Who should take the lead in preparing and submitting the application – the president, the rector's office, the faculty, or the institute?

This is up to the applying university to decide. Please ensure that the key contact person named in the application has the authority to provide Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft with further information and to speak on behalf of your institution.

Can I use AI applications to prepare the application?

The use of AI / LLMs is generally permitted and does not need to be flagged.

Does Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft use AI applications to process my application?

The head office of Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft guarantees that it will never feed the candidates' research concept or any parts thereof into AI-based applications. The Foundation requires reviewers and committee members to confirm that no AI applications are used to assess applications and that the confidentiality of the documents is preserved.

Can we redact personal information contained in the reviews from the appointment process?

Yes, if this is necessary for data protection reasons. Please use the comment function in the PDF to provide context when redacting names, so that the statements still make sense, for instance by replacing the reviewer's name with "Reviewer 1".

How is a funding decision reached?

The candidate's scientific quality is ensured by reviews obtained as part of the appointment process and submitted with the application. Following a check to ensure applications meet all formal requirements, Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft will ask its experts for international mobility to assess the

submitted onboarding measures and rank all submissions. The Foundation reaches a decision based on the submitted reviews, the ranking, and the availability of funds.

How long will it take for a decision to be made?

The Foundation will inform you of its funding decision no later than three months after the application deadline.

Are there funding quotas for certain disciplines, subjects, universities, federal states, etc.?

No.

Will I receive feedback if my application is unsuccessful?

The head office will pass on any feedback that could be useful for future submissions.

When is the deadline to accept the funding and begin the professorship?

The appointment must be accepted no later than three months after funding has been approved, and the professorship must begin within the following nine months.

Other

I am a researcher. Can you advise me on how to negotiate with the applying university?

Within the scope of this program, Wübben Stiftung Wissenschaft can only provide guidance on joint applications submitted with a university. Please get in touch with us by telephone or email. For negotiations with the university, we suggest contacting organizations such as the **Deutscher Hochschulverband** or **Guidance, Skills & Opportunities for Researchers e. V.** for advice.