



## Directions for the Approval of Third-party funded Research Fellowships at Heidelberg University

### Preamble

Heidelberg University grants research fellowships from third-party funds in order to support training and research work, in particular for the qualification of doctoral students, and for more in-depth research by postdocs. Especially gifted young researchers from all disciplines represented at the University are eligible to apply.

These directions apply to all research fellowships handled by Heidelberg University, in particular for fellowships financed from donations, free third-party funds or other funds available (e.g. overheads) of the applicant [defined in §5(1) below]. Fellowships with external financing (e.g. fellowships from DAAD, DFG or foundations) are handled according to the funding regulations of the respective fellowship-awarding body. If the external fellowship-awarding body has few, if any, such regulations these directions shall apply.

In principle the University recommends that third-party funded projects provide for the granting of employment contracts.

### § 1 Fellowship

- (1) The research fellowship takes one of the following forms:
  - a) A doctoral fellowship, aiming to financially support young researchers in obtaining their doctoral degree;
  - b) A qualification fellowship, aiming to financially support graduates of universities of applied science and candidates with a bachelor degree in obtaining their doctoral degree;
  - c) A postdoctoral fellowship, enabling a focus on personal research and further training, and thereby the development of an academic profile after the doctorate, without being bound by instructions and without obligations towards an institution of higher education.
  - d) Fellowship for experienced guest researchers: enables experienced researchers (usually at least junior or assistant professors) to promote international academic exchange in their field of research without being bound by instructions or obligations to a university.
  
- (2) The fellowship awarded by Heidelberg University is not a basis for income within the meaning of §§ 18, 19 EStG (German Income Tax Act).



- (3) The fellowship awarded by Heidelberg University does not give grounds for an employment or service contract between Heidelberg University and the fellowship holder. Accordingly, the payments are not remuneration for work pursuant to §14 SGB IV (German Social Code) and are therefore not subject to compulsory social insurance. The fellowship holder must not be obliged to perform a specific academic task or service in return for the fellowship, or to do the work of an employee.

## § 2 Preconditions for granting a fellowship

- (1) Persons eligible are
- particularly qualified young researchers who are preparing for, carrying out and completing their doctoral work;
  - particularly qualified young researchers who are doing further research after completing their doctorate (“postdocs”);
  - particularly qualified graduates of universities of applied science, and candidates with a bachelor degree, who are preparing for, carrying out and completing their doctoral work.
- (2) A condition for the granting of the fellowship is that the candidate will not undertake any freelance or employed work by which he or she will earn an income higher than the basic tax-free allowance under §32a I (2<sup>nd</sup> sentence) EStG.
- (3) The fellowship from Heidelberg University may, in principle, only be granted if the fellowship holder has not been awarded any other fellowship from public or private funds. It shall be possible, on application, to top up an existing fellowship to the maximum amount mentioned below in §3.
- (4) The granting of a fellowship as the extension of an otherwise non-extendible employment contract is inadmissible.
- (5) There is no legal entitlement to the granting of a fellowship.



### § 3 Amount of the fellowship

- (1) The applicant must apply for the individual grant amounts pursuant to the amount named in the advertisement. However, the upper limits for the respective fellowship shall be as follows:
  - a) for a doctoral fellowship: € 1,468 per month
  - b) for a qualification fellowship: € 800 per month
  - c) for a postdoctoral fellowship: € 1,853 per month
  - d) for a doctoral fellowship for students of Medicine who are already expected to receive funding during their course: €838 per month
  - e) for a fellowship for experienced guest researchers € 8,425 per month (the fellowship holder is responsible for possible taxation, see § 7 (2) below)..
  
- (2) In accordance with the DFG fellowship regulations, Heidelberg University shall pay a child allowance in addition to each basic fellowship amount of each fellowship holder, subject to the presentation of a relevant birth certificate. The child allowance shall amount to €400 per month for one child and increase by €100 per month for each additional child.

### § 4 Duration of funding

- (1) The applicant must apply for the fellowship individually for the duration of the fellowship in accordance with the advertisement, but at most for 36 months.
  
- (2) In substantiated exceptional cases the support may be extended by 12 months and thus to a total of 48 months. This applies particularly to fellowship-holders with children.
  
- (3) The granting of the fellowship shall begin at the earliest with the first day of the month in which the grant notice was issued. The disbursement of the grant shall only take place after the grant notice has taken effect.
  
- (4) The funding shall end at the latest three months after the expiry of the month in which the last oral examination takes place, or with the expiry of the month in which the doctoral work at Heidelberg University has ended for other reasons (e.g. if the doctoral work is discontinued or the candidate goes to another university in order to complete his or her doctorate).



## § 5 Application process

- (1) The applicant is the project leader, the institute or the central university facility that has a fellowship to grant.
- (2) The applicant must publicly advertise that a fellowship is to be granted. The written advertisement shall name the amount of the fellowship, the planned duration of support and the documents to be submitted with the candidature. The applicant shall itself decide which documents should be submitted.
- (3) The young researcher who applies for a fellowship (candidate) must present the documents required in §5(2). The applicant shall check that they are complete.
- (4) A selection commission established by the applicant shall choose the candidate who best fits its criteria (“the pick of the crop”). It will apply for a fellowship by submitting the form “Application for approval of a third-party funded research fellowship at Heidelberg University” to Division 6 of the University Administration. The application of a fellowship at the Medical Faculties of Heidelberg University is administered by the respective Medical Faculty by using the according application forms.

## § 6 Approval

The granting of a fellowship takes place through a grant notice issued by Division 6 of the University Administration – respectively by the responsible Medical Faculty – and the subsequent declaration of acceptance by the recipient of the fellowship.

## § 7 Obligations of the fellowship-holder

- (1) The fellowship holder is obliged to immediately communicate any changes in his or her actual and legal circumstances, and particularly in personal and economic circumstances (e.g. obtaining a fellowship from elsewhere, or a change in income from paid work or assets).
- (2) The individual tax assessments must be observed independently by the fellowship holder.



## § 8 Overpayment and revocation

- (1) Overpayment of the fellowship must be repaid without delay.
- (2) A fellowship may be revoked with retrospective effect if
  - a) the approval was obtained through incorrect or incomplete information,
  - b) the University no longer receives the required budgetary finance from its funding body,
  - c) the research fellowship-holder no longer meets the selection criteria or fulfils his or her obligations,
  - d) requirements were not met, or not by a deadline set by the University,
  - e) the fellowship-holder receives another fellowship from public or private funds,
  - f) transitional funds, income as a freelancer or employee, or revenue from assets exceed the monthly fellowship amount for over six months by more than the tax-free allowance and there are no (longer any) reasons for interruption,
  - g) overpayments are not immediately reimbursed.
- (3) The fellowship-holder may not object to the University's claim to the repayment of excess payment of amounts on grounds of 'loss of enrichment' [§818(3) German Civil Code].

## § 9 Taking effect

These directions shall take effect one day after their publication in the Official Communications of the University.