SECOND CALL FOR APPLICATION
MAX PLANCK-HUMBOLDT RESEARCH UNITS IN AFRICA

Deadline: 15 October 2023

1. General
By means of "capacity building" through the training of young African scientists, the Max Planck Society and the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation wish to contribute to the establishment of stable research landscapes in African countries and thus to a long-term strengthening of development and prosperity on the continent. Therefore, both organizations jointly call for applications from early career researchers from Sub-Saharan-Africa for Max Planck-Humboldt Research Units in Africa.

2. Qualifications
In order to stimulate and support individual research locations and to anchor basic research more broadly in Sub-Saharan African countries, the Max Planck Society and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation are publishing a jointly financed, competitive, person-centred funding programme for ambitious and excellent African early career researchers heading a research unit. The applicant must be a group leader or a postdoc who is about to become a group leader at an African research institution or university in Sub-Sahara Africa. The candidate should have completed his/her doctorate not longer than 10 years ago. Exceeding this limit needs justification e.g. maternity leave etc.. Citizenship of the country of residence is not required, but a citizenship of a Sub-Sahara country.

3. Funding
3.1 Contribution of the Max Planck Society:
Up to three research group leaders of proven excellence at African research institutions/universities in Sub-Saharan countries will be provided with lump-sum research funding from the Max Planck Society amounting to 150,000 euros annually for five years each, which will enable them to collaborate scientifically with a Max Planck Institute of their choice and to jointly train junior researchers.

The Max Planck-funding can be used to cover:
- expenses for salaries of PhD students and postdocs newly hired for the research unit,
- consumables
- workshops
- instrumentation and equipment. (The purchase of any larger equipment amounting to more than 20,000 Euro needs approval from collaborating partner at MPI in written form, e.g. via email)
- travel expenses for the research unit
- maximum of up to 8 per cent of funding can be used for overhead costs but needs justification
3.2 Contribution of the African research organisation/university:
Once the candidates are selected, the collaborating research institution/university in Africa must provide a letter of commitment to support the research group leader in all matters. The Research Unit shall be hosted and accommodated at the African research institution/university, which agrees to provide adequate scientific and technical facilities, infrastructure, rooms and administrative services for the Research Unit and ensures the adequate integration of the Research Unit at the research institution/university in Africa.
Any costs exceeding the 8 per cent overhead, must be covered by the African research institution/university. This includes e.g. office space, lab space, research equipment, electricity, internet and maintenance etc.
Additionally, the letter needs to state that the African research institution/university covers the salary of the Principal Investigator and possible overhead costs incurred exceeding the above mentioned 8 per cent.
The funding will not be provided to cover any fees (e.g. tuition fees etc.) at the African research institution but is purely foreseen to be used as a research grant by the Max Planck-Humboldt Research Unit.

3.3 Contribution of the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation
As part of the sponsorship, additionally to the funds provided by the Max Planck Society, one postdoctoral researcher from the Research Unit or postdoc who is about to join the group is to come to the collaborating MPI as a Humboldt Research Fellow of up to two years’ duration funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/en/apply/sponsorship-programmes/humboldt-research-fellowship).
On returning to the home institution, the fellow can take advantage of the Humboldt Foundation’s alumni measures (e.g. return fellowship, equipment grants, renewed research stays in Germany). An application for the Humboldt Research Fellowship can be submitted after the Max Planck-Humboldt Research Unit has been established.
The assumption of an own research group leader position can be supported by applying for a Max Planck Partner Group. Furthermore, the measure can be flanked by mobility grants and/or kick-off workshops.

4. Contractual arrangements
The Max Planck grants are governed by a bilateral agreement between the Max Planck Society and the research institution in Africa hosting the Max Planck Humboldt Research Unit. A draft agreement for contract negotiations will be provided through MPG Headquarters.
5. **Application modalities**

Qualified candidates at an African research institution/university must pro-actively contact a Max Planck Director or a Max Planck Group Leader of an eligible Max Planck Institute as his/her cooperation partner in Germany. The programme is open to all Max Planck Institutes except the Max Planck Institute for Plasma Physics.

Both, the African candidate and the German host jointly prepare the application documents (refer to section 6.). If the cooperation partner in Germany is a Max Planck Group Leader, the group leader will need a letter of support from a Max Planck Director at the same Max Planck Institute.

The candidate and the Max Planck cooperation partner applying must provide completed application documents as listed below.

Application documents must be sent electronically (only) through the Max Planck Director applying for or supporting this cooperation to: Dr. Michaela Hergersberg (michaela.hergersberg@gv.mpg.de) at MPG Headquarters.

6. **Documents to be submitted by the Max Planck Director**

- Cover Page template
- Jointly agreed project description and planned research activities
- Plan for mutual exchange not only from the country of work of the grant holder to Germany but also from Germany to the Max Planck Humboldt Research Unit
- Plan for a sustainable cooperation beyond the five-year funding.
- Letter of support from the Max Planck Director of the host MPI in case the German cooperation partner is a Max Planck Group Leader
- Curriculum vitae of the African candidate
- List of publications of the African candidate
- Financial Plan and draft budget for five years (see template)
- Questionnaire Export Control Evaluation (will be provided only to host MPI)
- 2 Letters of recommendation from external scientist about the scientific merits of the African candidate
Candidate of the Max Planck-Humboldt Research Unit

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<th>First name</th>
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<td>Family/last name</td>
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Title of the jointly agreed project and planned research activities:

List of up to five most important publications and reason why they are most important:

Publication 1:

Publication 2:

Publication 3:

Publication 4:

Publication 5:

**Director of Max Planck Institute:**

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution and Department</th>
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Date ........................................ Signature Director of Max Planck Institute
**Budget for Five Years of Operations**

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<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Annual budget</strong></td>
<td>150.000</td>
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<td>Research Manpower newly hired for the research unit:</td>
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<td>Postdoctoral students</td>
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<td>PhD students</td>
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<td>Student labour</td>
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<td>Equipment and instrumentation (up to 20.000€, a higher amount needs approval from collaborating partner at MPI in written form e.g. e-mail)</td>
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<td>Travel &amp; hospitality for the research unit</td>
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<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>Operating costs ¹</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
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¹ Consumables, office expenses, books and publications, computer time and services, wlan and wifi costs, laboratory supplies, spare parts, maintenance, installations

Possible overhead costs (up to 8 per cent of funding) incurred by the host institution can only be covered with prior written justification