

Call for Applications

„Internationale Spitzenforschung“ by the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH

August 2022

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1 Preliminary remarks

Top-class research is crucial for the international competitiveness of research institutions. The exchange with internationally outstanding top scientists plays a key role in this. This is where the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH steps in and is relaunching the “International Spitzenforschung” programme in 2022. With this programme, the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH funds cooperation between foreign, internationally outstanding top scientists and research groups in Baden-Württemberg. It is calling on internationally top-class research groups from Baden-Württemberg to apply with cooperative research projects.

With this call for applications, the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH wants to contribute to strengthening the international networking of Baden-Württemberg research groups and support the intensive exchange of knowledge between the groups.

The prerequisite: Both research groups are already working at the highest level in the project topic.

2 Objectives and priorities of the programme

The aim of the programme is to promote excellent, internationally visible and competitive research projects in promising fields of research in Baden-Württemberg. The research projects must fall within the thematic priorities of the foundation's research programmes (<https://www.bwstiftung.de/de/bereiche-programme/forschung/>). The principal investigator must be active in the field of natural sciences, life sciences or engineering. Cooperation with groups from other research areas is possible. The respective project must be in line with the strategic orientation of the university or non-university research institution and demonstrate a high degree of innovation for the state of Baden-Württemberg.

The central criterion for the financing of a project is cooperation with an international top scientist. Cooperation with more than one person is also possible. The Baden-Württemberg research group must also be active in the field of top-level research. A cooperative approach with a high degree of complementarity between the research group of the top international researcher and the Baden-Württemberg research group is desirable. The temporary presence of the top international researcher at the Baden-Württemberg research institution should contribute to the successful implementation of the project. Mutual visits between members of the two research groups are also possible in order to encourage scientific exchange down to the working level.

The basic equipment and infrastructure must be available at the universities and non-university research institutions, respectively.

3 Eligible institutions

Only research institutions at universities and non-profit non-university research institutions based in Baden-Württemberg are eligible to participate.

4 Modalities

The research is conducted on behalf of Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH on the basis of a contract with the research institution (contract research). All rights of the project results are property of the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH.

The application is submitted by the research group of the university or non-university research institution situated in Baden-Württemberg. A declaration of the international top scientist of his or her consent to the cooperation must be included in the application.

Applications from universities must be submitted via the rectorates. Applications from non-university research institutions must be submitted via the head of the respective institution.

The projects will run for three years and will receive funding of up to € 500,000 (plus VAT).

Personnel, material and travel costs required for project work in Baden-Württemberg will be financed. For the foreign international top scientist, allowances for expenses such as travel expenses are financed.

The Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH is providing up to 2.5 million euros (plus VAT) for this research programme.

5 Scope and content of applications

The outline of the project application is specified in the online portal (<https://bws-isf.ptj.de/>) and includes in general the following points:

- General information on the project
- Information on the top scientists (principal investigator and international partner)
- German abstract
- Objectives of the project
- Relevance and innovation
- State-of-the-art, preliminary data and infrastructure
- Work programme

- Milestone plan
- Future impact and exploitation
- Financial plan

The requirements for the applications are laid down in a guideline, which is available on the online portal <https://bws-isf.ptj.de/>. The guideline also contains the planned structure of the application as a template as well as the maximum number of characters for each of the above application points. This ensures that an application does not exceed the maximum number of 20 pages.

The application must be submitted in English. An abstract of the project must additionally be submitted in German.

The PDF document “Approval of Legally Binding” signed by the rectorate of the university or the management of the research institutions must be uploaded to the portal. The signature in the PDF is sufficient. The signed document must not be submitted by post or fax.

6 Application deadline and decision

The application must be submitted electronically via the online portal <https://bws-isf.ptj.de/>. The application must be received via the portal by **23rd November 2022** (cut-off period).

The submitted applications are first evaluated by expert reviewers from the respective scientific field. If the financial volume of the projects, which have been assessed as worthy of funding, exceeds the funds for the call for applications, a lottery will take place. The lottery will decide which of these excellent projects are funded.

No reasons will be given for the rejection of a project under this call. There is no entitlement to financing.

7 Project Management Agency

Baden-Württemberg Stiftung gGmbH has commissioned Project Management Jülich (PtJ) with the implementation and monitoring of the research programme. Project Management Jülich is responsible for the organizational aspects of the programme and is the key contact for all applicants.

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