

Connecting Young Scientists (ConYS)

KHYS aims at increasing the reliability of scientific career paths for young scientists. In the framework of the ► [KHYS Postdoc Office](#) we have therefore implemented the flexible and modular funding scheme Connecting Young Scientists (ConYS) which enables postdoctoral researchers¹ to independently develop and extend career-specific networks. The objective of the program is to support postdocs in increasing their self-reliance and further developing their profile. Postdocs can network with partners of their own choice and thus precisely tailor the modules to fit their career orientation and goals. ConYS enables postdocs to use professional networks as building blocks for their career strategy, for example for advancing their research projects, for preparing research proposals for third-party funding, for initiating their next postdoc position abroad, or for getting in touch with potential employees from the private sector. Networking partners can be other research groups in Germany or around the globe as well as universities, industry companies, and other organizations.

At a Glance

Target group: postdoctoral researchers at KIT¹

Supported activities: ConYS consists of three different modules:

- **Module 1:** Short-term journeys of KIT postdocs
- **Module 2:** Short-term stays of young scientists at KIT
- **Module 3:** Event support

The networking partners can be different ones for the various modules. All planned activities should take place **until November 2024**.

Scope of funding: The maximum sum for each funding package is EUR 5,000. Each package can cover one or several of the three modules.

If you have any questions concerning the Connecting Young Scientists (ConYS) program please contact ► [Denisa Kicmerova](#) or send an e-mail to conys@khys.kit.edu.

This measure is part of the KHYS Postdoc Office and sponsored by

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¹ KIT postdocs are early-career researchers and young scientists who have received their doctorates and who are doing research at KIT for a qualification phase that generally takes three years. The postdoctoral phase at KIT can be done directly after the doctorate or after an already completed postdoctoral phase (up to 6 years after the doctorate max.) at another university or non-university research institution in Germany or abroad.

Description of Modules

Module 1: Short-Term Journeys of KIT Postdocs

This module allows postdocs among other things to initiate a new important and beneficial contact, for example by visiting a researcher or research group that is renowned in the postdoc's area of expertise. It is also possible to use the fund in order to prepare a long-term research stay planned for the future or to spend a short-term stay at an industry company that is relevant to the postdoc's research project. The module will also cover costs for active participations in conferences or trade fairs.

Scope of funding:

The funding provided through ConYS covers **travel and subsistence expenses** for a period of **up to four weeks**. The travel accounting will take place according to the provisions of the Baden-Württemberg travel expenses law (Landesreisekostengesetz, LRKG).

Payment arrangements:

Please note that the entire accounting for the travel expenses has to be made via KHYS. Your institute may not cover any bills beforehand. Additional information concerning payment arrangements and the possibility to apply for an advance payment ("Vorschuss") will be supplied along with the notification of approval.

Module 2: Short-Term Stays of Young Scientists at KIT

This module allows postdoctoral researchers to invite an external doctoral researcher or a postdoc to come to KIT for a research stay. The stay of the tandem partner can be used for preparing joint publications and/or research projects and to strategically discuss new projects and proposals for third-party funding. This module helps postdocs to strengthen existing contacts and to use them to move forward with their career planning.

If the (post)doctoral researcher coming to KIT as a guest has a scholarship to finance his or her (post)doctorate, he or she has to ensure that the scholarship provider consents with the funding in the framework of ConYS. For non-EU citizens, the notification of approval will be given under the condition of a positive outcome of a check regarding foreign trade regulations.

Scope of funding:

The funding provided through ConYS covers **travel and accommodation expenses** for a stay of **one month**. The guest will receive a refund for the costs related to the journey to and from Karlsruhe (economy class tickets for flight/train) as well as the accommodation costs for the stay in Karlsruhe. The costs for accommodation should not exceed EUR 1,200 for the one month. Please note that reimbursements for the guest stays **do not include** daily allowance (Tagegeld) and public transport during the stay (ÖPNV). For the travel accounting process according to the provisions of the Baden-Württemberg travel expenses law (Landesreisekostengesetz, LRKG), the guest needs to provide all original receipts (including boarding pass) as well as payment confirmations. This means the guests have to pay **in**

advance for the stay. The process of the reimbursement takes **at least 1 month after reaching in all travel documents** to KHYS.

Payment arrangements:

The process for the payment will be defined for each guest individually. As a rule, the reimbursement of the travel costs will take place once the stay has been concluded. This means that the guest will have to pay for the journey in advance. KHYS will directly assign and pay out the grant to the guest. Additional information concerning payment arrangements will be supplied along with the notification of approval.

Module 3: Event Support

This module provides postdocs with financial support for independently organizing and implementing events at KIT. In principle, the events should include guests from outside KIT and support the applicants in further attaining their career goals – inside or outside academia. The funding can cover costs for typical events such as conferences, workshops, seminars, or summer schools but also for talks from (international) alumni or guests from science or industry. It is also possible to stage fireside chats or strategic meetings for discussing publications or proposals for third-party funding. At least one of the following criteria should apply: The event should be international, interdisciplinary, or industry-related.

Scope of funding:

The funding provided through ConYS can cover costs for room rental, material expenses, travel costs, fees for trainers or speakers, or catering costs. It is also possible to cover the salary for a student or research assistant (“Hiwi”) who supports the postdoc in the organization of the event. The general administrative as well as budgetary and economic regulations of KIT apply.

Payment arrangements:

Payment arrangements will be individually defined together with KHYS depending on the costs in question. Additional information concerning payment arrangements will be supplied along with the notification of approval.

Please note for all three modules:

- Funding can cover one or several of the modules.
- The networking partners can be different ones for the various modules.
- Due to calculations using estimates of costs, it may happen that the approved funds do not fully cover the expenses for the individual modules. In this case, the applicant must reduce spending or additionally use funds of his/her institute.
- Non-compliance with the stipulations of ConYS may induce KHYS to withdraw the funding approval, refuse payments, or reclaim payments that it has already made.
- Double funding is not permitted.

Current Call for Applications

Deadlines and Dates:

- Application deadline: **Monday, January 15, 2024**
- Selection process: Selection decisions will be made by members of the [▶ KHYS steering committee](#) at a meeting in **late February 2024**.
- Funding period: All of the planned activities should take place **until November 2024**.

Application Requirements:

- The applicant has to be a postdoctoral researcher with a doctoral degree and is doing research at KIT for a [▶ qualification phase](#) that generally takes three years.
- The applicant has to be a [▶ member of KHYS](#).
- The superior of the postdoc has to support the application.
- The KIT applicant has to conclusively state how the modules applied for support his/her career strategy.
- Applicants must meet the application deadline stipulated.
- The application documents must be complete and formally correct.

Application Documents:

Please send the following documents as a single PDF file in the order listed below to conys@khys.kit.edu. All documents should be in English. Concerning the annexes A to C you only have to fill in the annex(es) for the module(s) you apply for. Please send the Excel table as a separate attachment and exclusively in an Excel file format.

- [▶ Application form](#)
- [▶ Annex A – Module 1](#)
- [▶ Annex B – Module 2](#) – including a letter of intent by the guest stating his/her interest in coming to KIT
- [▶ Annex C – Module 3](#)
- **CV including date of birth and course of studies** (discipline, duration, place, grade)
- **Scan of doctoral degree and certificate** (if applicable including transcript of records)²
- **Scan of master degree and certificate** (if applicable including transcript of records)²
- [▶ Assessment form](#) by the superior of the postdoc which shows his/her support for the applied measures and assesses the benefits of the chosen modules (if desired, the superior can also send it directly to KHYS)
- [▶ Key data Excel table](#)

² For foreign degrees the documents should be handed in in the original language and as a German/English translation.

Selection Criteria:

- Compliance with application requirements
- Scientific track record of the KIT applicant (i.e. previous scientific achievements, publications, awards etc.)
- Conclusiveness of description of the choice of modules and how they will support the applicant's career strategy
- Submissions from applicants who are at an early stage of their postdoc period are more likely to be successful.
- Assessment by superior

Procedure

Approval:

As soon as your application has been approved, you will be notified via e-mail. The notification of approval will contain information on the amount of funding that will be paid out and will cover all modules applied for. Attached to the e-mail there will be a Written Statement of Commitment that you have to sign and send back to us.

If applicable, the person who will receive funding in the framework of Module 2 will receive an individual letter of grant approval. In addition, they will have to sign agreements covering the grant payment. Please note that the KIT institute is obliged to conclude an Infrastructure Use Agreement.

Both the applicant and the person traveling in Module 2 (if applicable) will be sent information sheets for the respective module(s). These will include extensive information regarding administrative steps necessary for the payments and the preparation of the stay(s) and/or event(s). The obligation to comply with the regulations and processes mentioned in these sheets is a compulsory part of the Connecting Young Scientists (ConYS) program.

Reporting Duty:

Once all activities funded by ConYS have been completed, you are obliged to submit a [▶ final report](#) within four weeks. Reporting obligations are a mandatory element for receiving funding within the framework of ConYS. Once we have received the final report, we will issue a certificate regarding the participation in the Connecting Young Scientists Program (ConYS).