

## Guidelines

for the Awarding of Research Travel Grants to Junior Researchers of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) within the Framework of their Research Projects

### 1. Objectives and Funding Principles

One of the core tasks of Karlsruhe House of Young Scientists (KHYS) is the internationalization of the doctoral and postdoctoral research phases. One of the tools to help achieve this goal is the awarding of Research Travel Grants to doctoral and postdoctoral researchers<sup>1</sup>. The Research Travel Grant serves the purpose to further qualify these persons (Art. 2 LHG). The grant is a subsidy to financially support travel and accommodation costs as well as living expenses for a research period abroad of a minimum of three to a maximum of six months. The maximum amount of the subsidy is determined by KHYS and, among others, is subject to funds available.

### 2. Eligibility Requirements

In general, all doctoral and postdoctoral researchers of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) who want to conduct part of their current research project at an institution outside of Germany can apply for the Research Travel Grant. Funding is provided for a research stay abroad of a minimum of three to a maximum of six months either in industry or at a university or other research institution.

Applicants need to meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be a **doctoral researcher** at KIT<sup>2</sup> and officially accepted as a doctoral researcher
- **or** be a **postdoctoral researcher** at KIT.
- They must be a [member of KHYS](#).
- During the research stay abroad, they must continue to receive payment from their employer respectively scholarship provider<sup>3</sup> (at least equivalent to the payment received for a half-time position in the remuneration grade TVL-E13).<sup>4</sup> Funding must be available for a period of several months exceeding the end of the research stay abroad.
- For doctoral researchers: **The research project abroad must be an expansion of the applicants' doctoral research and must be incorporated into the dissertation but may not be an original component thereof**. Doctoral researchers explain this in the application form accordingly.
- Submission of application before end of deadline.
- All application documents must be complete and formally correct.
- The pure research stay including direct arrival and departure and minus any interruptions (e. g. conference participation) may not be less than three months. When planning the trip, any holiday-related closures of the host institute must also be taken into account. Interruptions should be reduced to a necessary minimum.

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<sup>1</sup> See also [KHYS membership for postdocs](#). Excluded are junior research group leaders (Emmy Noether, Young Investigator Group etc.) and/or members of the Young Investigator Network (YIN).

<sup>2</sup> Doctoral researchers at KIT are doctoral candidates who are accepted at a KIT Department as well as those who are doing their doctorate at another university but have their main research focus at KIT.

<sup>3</sup> The compatibility of the scholarship (depending on the scholarship provider) with possible KHYS funding has to be examined.

<sup>4</sup> For tax and social insurance reasons, the Research Travel Grant cannot provide funding if the applicant has an employment relationship with KIT with a monthly salary of **less than 538 EUR** ("Minijob") during the stay abroad. Such employment contracts must be interrupted or increased for all full calendar months of the stay abroad.

### 3. Funding Criteria

The following criteria will be considered for the approval of grants, taking into account the duration of the (post)doctoral research phase so far:

- Fulfillment of all eligibility requirements
- Expected added value of the research stay abroad (to the (post)doctoral research project, the applicant, the KIT working group)
- Strategic relevance for KIT
- Previous scientific achievements
- Previous publications
- Prizes, awards, and contributions to conferences, if applicable
- Grades of academic degrees and, if applicable, doctoral degree
- Assessment by main supervisor (i. e. person authorized to participate in doctoral procedures)

### 4. Funding Amount

The amount granted is based on the support rates for doctoral researchers of the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) and depends on the duration as well as the destination of the research stay. Successful applicants will be notified in writing of the **maximum** possible funding amount. However, the **final** funding amount will be determined upon return from the research stay by the final calculation of the travel expense report (see below). Please note that the grant is a financial subsidy and not a full cost recovery of all travel expenses.

**The following expenses will be subsidized up to the final grant amount determined by KHYS:**

- One outward and one return journey including
  - outward and return flights (Economy) and/or train tickets Deutsche Bahn (2nd class only),
  - transfer to the airport or train station within Germany and to/from your final destination (local public transport (Economy only)),
  - use of private car, taxi, or similar will only be accepted in exceptional cases for which reasons must be specified.
- Accommodation at the place of destination
- Daily allowance

**Funding is not provided for:**

- Fees for visa, tuition fees, and any other kind of fees
- Insurances of any kind
- Any private or public transport at the destination during the research stay (except for transfer on arrival and departure)
- Any interruptions of the research stay. These need to be stated in the official travel application form "Dienstreiseantrag" (possible also upon return). The funding amount will be reduced accordingly afterwards.

Should additional funding for the research stay abroad be provided by a third party, the corresponding amount can be deducted from the funding provided by KHYS. Should such additional funding be granted once the application has been handed in or the KHYS Research Travel Grant has been approved, KHYS must be notified in writing immediately.

**Please note:** The funding amount refers to **the number of full or half months** applied for, e. g. travel period April 23 to August 7. If your trip does not comprise full or half months, the funding amount will be reduced accordingly in the final travel expense calculation. This is also the case if the actual length of stay is shorter than the approved period, e. g. April 23 to August 7, or if the research stay has been interrupted due to e. g. conference attendance, vacation, or similar. The grant amount will then be reduced accordingly in the final travel expense calculation in which the exact number of days will be taken into account. Please note that the research stay (not the travel period) must not be shorter than three months.

The days between Christmas and New Year will normally not be counted in the calculation of the final travel expenses because research facilities are usually closed during this period, and the final funding sum will be reduced accordingly in retrospect.

The final amount of the grant provided by KHYS will be calculated upon return from the research stay on the basis of the exact number of days of the research activity pursuant to the provisions of the “Landesreisekostengesetz” (LRKG), the Baden-Württemberg law on business travel expenses. This means that the maximum funding amount stated in the letter of grant approval can be reduced retrospectively. Should the final funding amount be less than the sum paid out as an advance payment, the difference will be reclaimed. A reclaim may also occur if the final calculation by the travel expenses office reveals that the reimbursable travel expenses (including the daily allowance calculated by the travel expenses office) are less than the advance payment.

In the event of non-compliance with the grant conditions, multiple interruptions, or if the research activity has a duration of less than three months, KHYS reserves the right to withdraw the grant approval, to not make payments, or to reclaim payments already made.

**KIT advises grant recipients to fulfil all necessary tax requirements upon receipt of payment. Please note that for stays abroad of more than three months different fiscal specifications apply.**

## 5. Funding Procedure

Calls for applications for the Research Travel Grant are usually opened twice a year and will be published on the [KHYS website](#).

### 5.1. Application Procedure

The documents listed below must be submitted with the application. You can [download](#) all templates relevant for the application from our KHYS website.

- [Application Form](#) (approx. five pages) (download)
- Information on [Financing](#) (download) during the stay abroad
- Form “[Assessment by Main Supervisor](#)” (i. e. person authorized to participate in doctoral procedures) (download) (e.g. assessment of applicant, evaluation of proposed research project, assessment of benefits of the stay abroad, etc.).
- Letter of invitation<sup>5</sup> from the applicant’s **host**.
- Comprehensive CV: signed and dated, **including the grades achieved in the applicant’s high school and university examinations, e. g. Bachelor’s and Master’s degree, “Vordiplom” and “Diplom”**
- Certificates **and** Transcripts of records of Master **and** Bachelor degrees

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<sup>5</sup> The letter must be written on the official letterhead of the inviting institute and signed by the inviting person. The duration and period of the stay as well as the name of the inviting supervisor and the institute must be stated. Additional information such as working group and topic is desirable but not mandatory. E-mail invitations or invitations from the host institution, e. g. human resources department, are not sufficient.

- **In case of foreign academic degrees:**
  - Certificate of Master's degree **as well as** Transcript of Records in the **original language**
  - Certificate of Master's degree **as well as** Transcript of Records in **English or German**
  - Certificate of Bachelor's degree **as well as** Transcript of Records in the **original language**
  - Certificate of Bachelor's degree **as well as** Transcript of Records in **English or German**
  - Document stating the grading system of the respective university (explaining the highest and lowest grade possible as well as the distribution of the grades, e. g. proportion of merit grades, mark range)
- Doctoral researchers: Letter of acceptance as doctoral researcher issued by the applicant's department. The validity of the acceptance (as doctoral researcher) must extend several months beyond the end of the research stay abroad.
- Postdoctoral researchers: Certificate of doctoral degree, Transcript of Records, **and** KIT employment contract. The validity of the contract must extend several months beyond the end of the research stay abroad.

**AND**

- Excel table "[Key Data Applicant](#)" (download) – as a separate attachment and exclusively in excel file format. In the table, please summarize the information given in the application form in bullet point style.

Applicants must fill in the forms digitally and submit all documents in the order listed above **in a single PDF file** (with the exception of the excel file; also the form "Assessment of the application for the KHYS Research Travel Grant by main supervisor" may be handed in separately by the supervisor if he or she wishes to do so). Applications must be complete and submitted within the deadline. Should the exact dates of the research period be uncertain at the time of application, these can be submitted at a later point in time. Candidates can apply for a research period of full or half months from three to six months.

## **5.2 Approval Procedure and Processing**

### **5.2.1 Approval**

The selection board consists of members of the [KHYS Steering Committee](#) and will make the decision on funding timely after the application deadline. All applicants will be informed of the decision in writing. Successful applicants will receive a letter of grant approval and further information on the process and its requirements.

### **5.2.2 Payment**

80% of the **maximum amount of funding** determined by KHYS will be paid in advance no earlier than four weeks prior to departure. The **final amount of funding** will be determined upon return depending on the final length of the research stay and in accordance with all regulations of the Baden-Württemberg law on business travel expenses (Landesreisekostengesetz). Further details on the advance payment and final travel cost calculation as well as on respectively required documentation are laid out in an Information Sheet that will be sent to every successful applicant and is an integral part of the Letter of Grant Approval.

In case of **withdrawal from the grant**, the grant recipient is obliged to immediately pay back any travel advance payment he or she may already have received. KHYS has to be notified in writing immediately should the research stay be postponed or interrupted.

### 5.2.3 Miscellaneous

- The research stay has to begin within twelve months after receipt of the grant approval.
- All KIT employees are obliged to carry an A1 certificate with them on business trips and deployments to other European countries (EU, EEA, CH). For business trips and deployments to all countries outside EU, EEA and CH, business travelers must apply for a so-called deployment certificate for the respective country. Please apply for this form at PSE (see [PSE website](#) under A > A1; in the Self Service Portal please switch to English; [Information in English](#)) in good time before the start of the trip. Non-employees of KIT need to contact the HR departments at their respective employers. These regulations do not apply to scholarship holders.
- Grant recipients are responsible for ensuring adequate **health, accident, and casualty insurance coverage** during their research stay abroad.
- Please note that non-German applicants who need a **visa for Germany** have to contact the appropriate foreigners' office at their German place of residence in order to enquire about the regulations for re-entering Germany after the stay abroad. In many cases, the residency permit for Germany will expire if the country has been left for more than six months.
- As the first page of the travel application form will be kept at KHYS, the grant recipient has to ensure that his or her KIT institute is informed about the absence from the institute for the duration of the research stay.

### 5.3 Obligations Following the Research Stay Abroad

- The grant recipient has to make an appointment with KHYS to prepare the final travel expense report **within two weeks** of return from the research stay. All documentation and original receipts listed in the information sheet must be submitted in this appointment. Any interruptions of the research stay, e. g. due to conference attendance, must be reported in full.  
The final amount of the fundable travel costs will be calculated by the travel expenses office of the University Responsibilities (UA) pursuant to the provisions of the Baden-Württemberg law on business travel expenses (Landesreisekostengesetz, LRKG). The calculation will be based on the receipts for travel and accommodation as well as a country-specific daily allowance. Once the final calculation has been completed, the remaining 20% of the funding amount will be paid out or offset against possible reductions (see above under **4. Funding Amount**).
- As a compulsory part of the Research Travel Grant, grant recipients have to submit a [final report](#) (download) on their research stay of **five to eight pages** as PDF file within four weeks upon return from the stay.
- If the research stay abroad funded by KHYS contributes towards a publication, KHYS must be informed of this. An appropriate reference to the funding received from KHYS must be added to the acknowledgements in the publication as well as the acknowledgements of the doctoral thesis (e. g. "The research stay abroad was financially supported by Karlsruhe House of Young Scientists (KHYS)"). Furthermore, grant recipients agree that their contact details may be used by KHYS for inquiries regarding the support of KHYS activities (e. g. field reports, interviews).

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