

FAQ: Frequently asked questions about the Helmholtz Doctoral Prize 2023 – Track B

- *How should the formulation „PhD students [...] have [...] a) completed their PhD at a Helmholtz Center [...] in the past 14 months” be understood?*

This means that for nominees who have completed their doctorate, the doctorate may have been completed no more than 14 months before the deadline for submitting the application to the Helmholtz Office. The date of the defense is decisive.

Example: The deadline for submitting the application is December 01, 2023. You defended your dissertation between October 01, 2022 and November 30, 2023 and thus fulfill the application requirements.

- *How should the phrase „doctoral students [...] are b) about to complete their doctorate“ be understood?*

This means that the doctorate does not have to be completed yet, but the submission of the doctoral thesis is planned within one year after the deadline of the nomination. The decisive factor for this is the last work plan discussed with the Thesis Advisory Committee.

Example: The deadline for submitting the application is December 1, 2023. The work plan shows that the doctoral thesis is to be submitted by November 30, 2023 - the application requirements are met.

- *What if the doctoral student does not have a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC)?*

The Helmholtz PhD guidelines stipulate that PhD students are supported by a PhD committee, including annual meetings to discuss the PhD student's work plan. A comparable structure may also support the doctoral student. If no comparable committee exists, or if there is no written work plan coordinated with the TAC, from which the requested date precedes, the supervisor can also confirm the planned submission date in writing.

- *What should be submitted to the transfer office for evaluation if the doctorate has not yet been completed?*

For candidates who have not yet completed their doctorate, the transfer office receives the exposé to be submitted for nomination. Furthermore, it is up to the candidates (doctorate completed or not yet completed) to decide which (further) information will be made available to the transfer office in order to make an assessment of the application potential of the research carried out in the doctorate or the research project.

- *What exactly does the additional offered Field Study Fellowship funding option entail?*

The Field Study Fellowship enables each of the awardees to conduct a market exploration through an additional funding budget (up to 20.000 EUR over 3 months) to better understand customer needs through interviews and market research. The budget is to be used exclusively for personnel and material costs for market exploration. Funding is available for one to a maximum of two persons, with the time commitment varying from 50% part-time to full-time. Only one person can be funded full-time.

In addition, all awardees will be offered market exploration-focused mentoring through the Field Study Mentor Program, with an additional match of up to 5,000 EUR from this program.

- *In which period should the Field Study Fellowship be taken up?*

The Fellowship can be arranged flexibly by the grantees, but must be announced to the Helmholtz Office no later than six months after the announcement of the award and commenced within one year after the announcement of the award.

- *Can the Field Study Fellowship also be claimed if the fellows are no longer employed at a center of the Helmholtz Association, but at another scientific institution in Germany or abroad?*

No. The Field Study Fellowship funding and mentoring can only be claimed if an employment relationship with a Helmholtz Center exists during the entire funding period.

- *Who do I need to notify of the planned Field Study Fellowship?*

On the one hand, the Helmholtz Center, since the grant agreement must be contractually regulated, implemented and settled via this institution. On the other hand, the Helmholtz Head Office must be notified of the utilization of the fellowship no later than six months after the award announcement and the implementation of the market exploration (and mentoring, if applicable) must be coordinated in more detail with the corresponding contact persons of the Transfer and Innovation Division (see [here](#)) as well as with the contact person of the Initiative and Networking Fund responsible for the PhD Award (Martina Carnott martina.carnott@helmholtz.de).

- *What is the process for applying for the Field Study Fellowships won?*

For the implementation and financing of the fellowship from the Initiative and Networking Fund, a rough cost planning for the use of the personnel and material resources required for the market exploration must be submitted. On this basis, a grant agreement will be concluded between the Helmholtz Association and the Helmholtz Center, the implementation of which must be documented (e.g. report, explainer video, self-reflection – as agreed).

- *What personal and non-personnel costs can be funded through the Field Study Fellowship?*

Personnel Costs: These are based on the pay scale classification of the persons involved. The calculation of personnel costs should be based on the current values of the TVöD. The cost estimates include all ancillary personnel costs. Costs above and beyond this (e.g. overheads, non-person-specific costs) are not eligible for funding.

Material Costs: All material and travel costs required to carry out the market survey are eligible; overhead costs are not.