

Early Career Concept for PostDocs at Technische Universität Braunschweig

A considerable portion of a university's research output comes from young scientists. With its **Early Career Concept**, launched in December 2016, TU Braunschweig promotes outstanding and motivated young scientists.

The Early Career Concept was designed for postdoctoral students, more specifically scientific staff with a doctoral degree, either habilitated or not (yet) habilitated, with up to eight years of postdoctoral research experience (excluding non-research time), as well as junior professors. Applicants are expected to pursue a scientific career.

The concept has three focus areas:

- A comprehensive range of **advisory and mentoring services** offered by experienced scientists for the individual development of excellent young scientists
- An **attractive working environment and targeted support** at TU Braunschweig for outstanding young scientists **from Germany and abroad**
- Support for our own scientific progeny during transitional phases and in preparing successful careers in science

Advice, Mentoring and Network

To advance their individual scientific careers in the best way possible, young scientists at TU Braunschweig can tap into a broad range of advisory, mentoring and further education offers. Participants benefit from **individual career counselling** and **best practice examples** taken from the careers of outstanding TU Braunschweig scientists. The programme aims at strengthening their **independence**, develop and hone their **individual competencies**, support them in their **research funding efforts** and promote **professional and interdisciplinary exchanges through regional, national and international networks**.

Several University facilities offer programmes for early stage researchers. These include:

Career Service

The Career Service offers 1:1 counseling for young scientists with a focus on career opportunities in the business world. It works continuously to develop and intensify strategic collaborations with mid-sized, regional as well as large industry partners in order to give young scientists the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of what it's like to work in a particular industry sector or job role and to establish a network of contacts.

- Individual advice / counseling (e.g. feedback on application documents, job interview simulation, development of a personal competence profile or a job-market entry strategy, information on networking and information sources)
- Employer Contacts

DFG-Network

The Braunschweig DFG network was founded in 2014. This network brings together scientists with many years of DFG experience in the fields of committees and proposals. The aim is to support scientists and academics in the successful submission of proposals. Particularly in the case of project proposals for coordinated DFG programmes, such as

Collaborative Research Centres or Research Units, applicants can benefit from the existing knowledge of the members. A particular focus is on supporting young researchers.

The members of the DFG network provide advice and support for individual, collaborative and large-scale projects, particularly in these specific areas:

- Mentoring for young researchers (including individual proposals)
- Informal information events, e.g. on managing joint projects or building national and international networks
- Advice and support for the preparation of preliminary proposals and proposals for coordinated programmes (SFBs, FORs, GRKs) as well as
- Accompanying the preparation of on-site assessments

Research Services and European Office

The Research Services and European Office provides guidance on national, European and international research funding programs, reviewing applications, support on contractual issues, project management and network building.

- Coordination of the activities and measures of the Early Career Concept
- Advice for research funding for national, European and international funding programmes
- Support regarding project proposals and contractual issues and project management
- Advice for individual researchers and institutes on the strategic development of their research activities
- Workshops, e. g. on grant proposal-related topics and on peer-learning

Equal Opportunities Office

TU Braunschweig's Equal Opportunities Office offers young female scientists special career support. TU Braunschweig's Family Office provides women and men service and counselling for realizing the compatibility of family and science.

- Mentoring for female postdocs
- fiMINT (a programme addressing female students and graduates in the STEM fields)

Grad^{TUBS} Graduate Academy

The Grad^{TUBS} Graduate Academy supports doctoral students as they make career choices and decide on their goals. Among other things, it organizes seminars on leadership skills and evening events with great networking potential for young scientists. For these events GradTUBS invites local and international experts in order to encourage dialogue and help doctoral students establish contacts in both research and industry.

- Workshops on key qualifications
- Networking events with business and non-university science organizations
- Individual Career Coaching

Mobile Researchers' Centre (MORE)

The Mobile Researchers' Center (MoRe) is the central information center for international scientists in Braunschweig. In addition to advising and supporting international scientists at the TU Braunschweig, at the large scale research institutes and at business partners in the region, the Mobile Researchers' Center offers support for the employees and decision-makers from institutes hosting foreign scientists.

- Support in all issues of everyday life, from preparing your arrival and finding suitable accommodation to dealing with the authorities or finding a daycare center for children.
- Support for the employees and decision-makers from institutes hosting foreign scientists.
- Organization of network events and excursions for scientists and their families on a regular basis (for example the monthly international “Stammtisch”, welcome dinner, guided tours, etc.).

Personnel and Professional Development Department

The offer of the personnel and professional development department is addressed to all employees of the Technische Universität Braunschweig with the objective to recognize, maintain, develop and promote the performance and learning potential of the employees.

- Internal training and development program (e.g. trainings and workshops covering topics of personal development, development of key qualifications, health management or administrative practice)
- Consultation and relaying of external seminars, training courses and management development programmes (e.g. “Hochschulübergreifenden Weiterbildung” (HüW))
- Support regarding health issues, coping with stress and creating of health-promoting conditions

Staff Unit Corporate Communications and Press Service

The staff unit Corporate Communications and Press Service functions as central contact for the concept of communication of the TU Braunschweig. It mediates between different target groups, especially between journalists and scientists and the staff. For that purpose it provides current and relevant information to the media and produces content for the different media channels of the TU Braunschweig. Moreover, it offers advice for the facilities of the Technische Universität Braunschweig in all kinds of questions on communications and public relations as well as corporate design. It supports you in finding the right target group, an effective message and the best communication tool.

- Advice on internal and external questions on science communication and on professional interaction with the media

Project Group for Teaching and Media Education

The services of the university’s project group for Teaching and Media Education cover the promotion of innovative teaching and learning concepts, consulting, moderation, information, interdisciplinary exchange and a diverse set of qualification measures. The services for learning and teaching in higher education are open to all lecturers. The Prof.-Program comprises distinct workshops and events for all professors and junior professors.

Services for all lecturers:

- Financial support for innovative learning and teaching projects (e.g. staff appropriations)
- Qualification classes and workshops (basic and advanced programs in higher education)
- Advice and support, e.g. for innovative learning and teaching settings or with regard to teaching evaluations (Tenure Track)
- teaching observations

Prof.-Program:

- Welcome program for newly appointed (junior) professors
- Science and Leadership Forum on topics of human resources and self-management
- Coaching and consulting (for individuals or working groups, strategy development, organizational development)
- Other demand-oriented events (e.g. network events, individual workshops)

Knowledge and Technology Transfers

The Technology Transfer Office of the TU Braunschweig supports research fellows and post graduates who wish to start their own business as a university spin-off for example through coaching and grant application dedicated to high-tech entrepreneurship or knowledge based services. Furthermore the team of the Technology Transfer Office takes care of all inventors of the university.

- Entrepreneurship support: Coaching, entrepreneurial qualification, office space for entrepreneurship projects
- Inventions/Patents: Invention support, patent application, patent marketing
- Cooperation with industry partners: The Transfer Office helps finding project partners in industry and offers marketing support of scientific results

University Library

The University Library provides the TU Braunschweig with literature, media and information. It strives to improve the information literacy of its' users and provides the public with access to scientific information.

- Trainings (courses/workshops): e.g. search strategy, reference management with Citavi, copyright, open access, bibliometrics, research data management
- Publication services and support, e.g. concerning open access, open access funding, bibliometrics and research data management
- Customized consultation for specific research fields

Agnes-Pockels-Fellowship Programme

The Agnes Pockels Fellowship sponsors highly-qualified external researchers by offering additional funding for personnel and material costs over a period of three years. This grant is open to external scientists who have previously won highly-competitive third-party research programmes.

With its Agnes-Pockels-Fellowship TU Braunschweig supports research activities of scientists in the early stage of their career with up to 120.000€/ 3 years.

The aim is to provide an environment that promotes their academic career and international visibility through an excellent infrastructure. Furthermore, the fellows have the opportunity to cooperate with prestigious local research institutions and thus extend their research network. The call addresses outstanding scientists up to eight years after their doctorate who, at the time of their application, are grant holders one of the following highly competitive programmes:

- Emmy Noether Programme (DFG)
- Starting und Consolidator Grant of the European Research Council (ERC)
- BMBF Junior Research Groups
- Heisenberg- Programme (DFG)
- Liebig Fellowship (Fonds der Chemischen Industrie)
- Sofia Kovalevskaya Award Winners (Alexander von Humboldt Foundation)
- Helmholtz - Young Investigator Groups (The Helmholtz Young Investigator Groups must be located at TU Braunschweig)

- Max Eder Young Investigator Groups (Deutsche Krebshilfe)

Applications of candidates holding other awards are also welcome and will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Applications for a Fellowship are possible at any time and must be submitted jointly with a mentor. Only professors of TU Braunschweig are eligible as mentors.

A statement of the mentor regarding the candidate's suitability, as well as a commitment that the necessary infrastructure is available for the applicant, must be submitted as part of the application.

The application documents have to include the proof of doctorate, proof of grant award, name and institute of the mentor at TU Braunschweig, application form (see below), a motivation letter (1-2 pages) outlining the applicants interest to continue his / her research at TU Braunschweig together with an outline of the envisaged research activities and how they fit into TU Braunschweig's research focus areas, and a statement of the TU Braunschweig mentor (see application form).

Applicants will be informed about their application within 4 weeks after submission, short listed candidates will be invited for interviews which may be held by telephone / video conference if necessary.

PostDoc Career Grant

In order to promote young researchers in the initial stages of their postdoctoral career phase, Technische Universität Braunschweig awards PostDoc Career Grants as part of its early career funding activities to excellent young scientists. The funding aims to bridge the gap between an application for external (third party) funding and the start of the project. Applications are open to all PhD holders who are members of TU Braunschweig and are preparing a research project at TU Braunschweig in order to gain further qualification.

Funding up to 20.000 € for a maximum of six months may be granted. In addition, the faculty / institute has to provide the same amount of matching funds.

Application requirements

- a PhD with "summa cum laude"
- Research achievements that are well above average (e.g. peer-reviewed articles, conference contributions, invited conference speaker etc.)
- Application for external (third party) funding
- The applicant must be the Principal Investigator of the research project
- Commitment letter of the mentor / professor
- Confirmation of the faculty / institute that matching funds are available

Successful candidates are required to prove the submission of their project application by providing the confirmation letter of the funding organisation within eight weeks after the end of the PostDoc Career Grant funding. If the application is not been submitted or the grantee leaves the university before the end of the PostDoc Career Grant funding period, the hosting institute has to refund the PostDoc Career Grant.