VolkswagenStiftung

Individual Funding

Transatlantic bridge professorships

Profile area: Understanding Research

Deadline: Applications can be submitted at any time

Internationally renowned professors in the humanities and social sciences who are currently working in the USA and conducting research on the "future of democracy," "fundamental rights and academic freedom," or "the future of transatlantic relations" get the opportunity to work at an academic institution in Germany whilst maintaining ties with their home institution.

Research Area: Humanities and Social Sciences

Type of funding: Proportional financing of a professorship in Germany

Target Group: Professors at US Universities

up to 300,000 EUR

3 years

Prerequisite: Permanent position as a professor at a university in the USA, affiliation with a university or research institution in Germany

1 Objective

The funding programme is aimed at internationally renowned professors currently working in the United States in the humanities and social sciences who would like to work in both the United States and Germany. The funding enables annual periods of residence in Germany for exchange and joint research with colleagues in Germany, as well as the continuation of contributions to current academic and public debates in the United States. The focus is on cooperation and the cultivation of academic transatlantic relations.

2 Scope of Funding

2.1 Eligibility

The programme is open to professors (*full professors, associate tenured professors*) who are currently working at a US university and conducting research in the fields of "the future of democracy," "fundamental rights and academic freedom," or "the future of transatlantic relations" and who wish to continue this research at a university or non-university research institution in Germany. Applicants must have already conducted research in the above-mentioned fields, intend to continue this research programme together with colleagues at German academic institutions, and be able to demonstrate that this will provide new impetus for the field of research in Germany. The programme is aimed at mid-career professors; therefore, at the time of application, they should be at least five years away from reaching the standard retirement age in Germany. Applications must be submitted jointly with the host university or non-university academic institution in Germany.

2.2 Funding period and research stays in Germany

Applications can be made for a three-year affiliation with a university or non-university academic institution in Germany for 25 to 50 per cent of full-time employment, i.e. the funded professors will spend three to six months per year working in Germany. At the same time, they will maintain their affiliation with their home institution in the USA and continue to contribute to academic and public debates there.

3 Application and Selection Process

3.1 Schedule

Applications are accepted at any time, and decisions are usually made four to five months after submission.

3.2 Procedure

The assessment is carried out by an interdisciplinary panel of experts, who consider the following criteria:

- International reputation of the applicant, also with regard to the topics addressed
- The research programme's relevance to the topics "future of democracy," "fundamental rights and academic freedom," or "future of transatlantic relations"
- Further development of the applicant's previous research focus through the stay in Germany
- The research programme's impact on the field of research in Germany
- Coherence of the thematic integration at the host institution
- Content-related and financial commitment of the host institution.

Traditional book projects are not eligible for funding under this scheme.

The applicant may not reapply after receiving a negative decision.

3.3 Statement from the home institution in the USA

In the event of a positive funding decision, a statement from the applicant's home institution in the USA is expected. This statement must confirm that the home institution agrees to the grantees accepting the Bridge Professorship and their temporary affiliation with the host institution in Germany.

3.4 Commencement of funding

An application should only be submitted if, in the event of approval, it is possible to commence the funding promptly. The Foundation normally expects funding to commence within 6 months and no later than 12 months after a positive funding decision, otherwise the Foundation reserves the right to cancel the approval.

4 Information on the Application

4.1 Our Funding Platform

Applications must be submitted exclusively via the Volkswagen Foundation's funding portal. Please search for the relevant call for applications for this information sheet in the overview. If you have any technical questions about using the portal, please contact support@volkswagen-stiftung.de.

4.2 Information on Enclosements

Please use the templates provided for download on the website or on the funding platform. All documents must be submitted in English.

4.2.1 Project description

Please note the information on the maximum number of pages and other formal requirements contained in the template.

4.2.2 Curriculum Vitae

Please submit the applicant's CV in tabular-narrative form using the template available for download on the website for the call announcement.

4.2.3 Expenditure Plan

Please use only the Excel template available for download on the funding platform.

Funding may be requested to cover the following costs, whereby the period of presence in Germany must be at least 3 and no more than 6 months per year:

- Personnel resources for proportional financing of the professorship in Germany (maximum approx. 65,000 EUR per year)
- Travel allowance (1,500 EUR per return flight, maximum 4 flights per year)
- Rent subsidy (maximum 1,500 EUR per month)
- Flat-rate allowance for material resources (maximum 15,000 EUR per year) for auxiliary staff, travels, ongoing and one-off material resources (e.g. research travels in Germany, networking activities, organisation of workshops).

The maximum application amount for three years is 300,000 EUR.

The following costs are not covered:

- Costs for research assistants, coordinators or administrative assistants.
- Costs for office equipment, computers or costs as part of the basic equipment.
- Flat-rate overhead costs.

4.2.4 Salary calculation by the host institution in Germany

Please submit a salary calculation for the applicant prepared by the administration of the host institution in Germany, taking into account the duration of the annual stay (gross employer costs for the entire funding period).

4.2.5 Statement from the host institution in Germany

Please submit a statement from the university or institute management of the host institution in Germany, which includes the following points:

- Confirmation that, in the event of funding being granted, the applicant will be employed during the research stays in Germany.
- Commitment to provide premises, infrastructure, basic equipment and additional material resources (if possible).

- Explanation of how the professorship fits into the research profile of the host institute/department/faculty, the academic cooperation and the integration into teaching.

Please clarify the preparation of the statement with the host institution in Germany at an early stage. No template is provided for the statement.

4.3 Further Information

The foundation is not responsible for any financial obligations incurred before a letter of approval has been received.

Applications and/or project outlines that have been or will be submitted in this or a similar form to another funding organisation will not be considered by the foundation. Applications and/or project outlines that do not meet the formal requirements will not be reviewed. The foundation can only award funds to academic institutions.

5 Contact

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6 Further information

- Volkswagen Foundation website
- Website of the call for proposals
- FAQs and service (including downloads)
- Handling generative models in research and in the funding activities of the Volkswagen Foundation
- Guidance for more sustainable travel