„Momentum – Funding for recently tenured professors“ – FAQ

1. Why specifically three to five years after taking up the first lifetime professorship?

The time period is not chosen at random. Before taking on a permanent professorship, evaluation criteria usually have to be fulfilled or other achievements (publications, funding, etc.) have to be demonstrated. At this career stage, time or creative resources for a strategic development of your research and teaching will be limited. The start of a professorship is usually accompanied by a change of location and other tasks (e.g. setting up teaching, establishing a laboratory, completing previous work) are initially at the forefront. At the same time there are usually sufficient resources at the start of a professorship in the form of appeal funds.

2. What does strategic development entail?

The concept does not have to represent a completely new research approach, but rather a new research direction for the applicant. The intent is not a departure from the previous scientific orientation. Rather, the aim is to allow a researcher to "shift" or create a "second pillar" of research.

3. Who is eligible?

Applications are open to professors

- at Universities in Germany,
- Art and Music colleges, insofar as they conduct academic research,
- Universities of Education in Baden-Württemberg.

4. Who is not eligible?

Applications are not open to professors

- at universities of applied sciences
- non-university institutions (also in a double affiliation with a university)
- Medical universities, unless they have an unlimited university status in their entirety (i.e. the recognition of individual faculties as a university is not sufficient)
5. As of when does the deadline count in the calculation of eligibility?

The date you took up your appointment as a tenured professor counts, not the date that you received the appointment. At the same time, the deadline refers to the respective deadline for the short proposals, not to a possible start of the funding.

In particular, the following constellations are conceivable:

- Professors that had a prior fixed-term professorship that then became a tenured position are eligible 3-5 years after they received tenure. The decision to receive tenure must be the result of an evaluation procedure.

- For holders of “professorships on probation”, the deadline will be calculated from the date of their appointment, as in these cases no evaluation takes place. To be eligible for funding in the case of a positive decision, the fixed-term professorship must become a tenured position.

- If a change of institution took place within the 3-5 years after taking up the first tenured professorship, the date of the first appointment counts, regardless of where this took place (also abroad).

- Permanent director positions at non-university institutions abroad (e.g., CNRS (F), CNR (I)) are considered professorship-equivalent. Thus, this activity is included in the 3-5 year time limit.

- Holders of a Heisenberg professorship are also entitled to apply from the time of the positive evaluation of the professorship and the commitment to grant tenure. Please note that in the case of a positive decision, the professorship must be tenured before the funding can commence.

6. What does the exclusion of project funding mean?

Momentum is not an offer for research projects in the classical sense: for instance, PhD positions cannot be applied for.

7. What should be considered when applying for a semester abroad?

If a substitute chair is applied for in the context of a stay abroad lasting a maximum of two semesters, this substitute should be recruited from the field of junior scientists (see "Information for applicants 115"). The remuneration for this position follows that of a W2 or W3 basic salary. In the case of a positive funding decision, a calculation of the real costs must be submitted.

8. What should be considered when applying for a (partial) teaching exemption?

In total, a two-year period may not be exceeded. This period may include a stay abroad for a maximum of two semesters with a complete exemption from teaching. A combination of partial and full exemptions is also possible; the following scenarios are conceivable, among others:
• two semesters abroad and one year partial exemption from teaching
• one semester abroad and one and a half years partial exemption from teaching

9. Are applicants who have previously held a third party funded position at the same university eligible for application?

If the applicant has already held a fixed-term position at the university (e.g. Emmy Noether, ERC, fixed-term AR), an application may be submitted three to five years after taking up a tenured professorship at the same university.

10. What periods of leave will be credited to the application deadline?

As is usually the case for Volkswagen Foundation initiatives, both the actual periods of parental leave taken by the applicant and longer absences due to illness or leave to care for relatives will be taken into account in the application deadline.

11. Are other functions / offices at the university counted towards the application deadline?

If the applicant has completed a term as vice-president or dean of a faculty at the university that entailed a high administrative burden, this period will not be counted towards the application deadline of three to five years after taking up the first lifetime professorship.

12. I have a secondary position at another scientific/non-university institution. Am I eligible to apply?

Professors that have a double affiliation are not eligible for funding. If you pursue a secondary scientific position at a non-university institution, the eligibility depends on the specific circumstances, such as content and time spent at this position. We ask you to contact us before applying for a “Momentum” grant, if you pursue such a secondary position.