

INFORMATION ON FAMILY-RELATED BENEFITS

With the objective of a better work-life balance for researchers with children, the Volkswagen Foundation offers additional funding opportunities in its initiatives supporting individual persons (e.g. fellowships). This information provides a brief summary of the main conditions. It should be pointed out that the Foundation is responsive to specific individual situations and willing to consider other forms of support, including those proposed by grantees themselves.

1. Eligibility

Funding is available for male or female researchers raising one or more children. As a second prerequisite, the supplementary funds are restricted to funding initiatives and calls specifically targeted at young researchers submitting applications for the funding of their own positions, in particular postdoctoral positions, and W1 professorships in Germany.

2. Adaptation of the project duration, replacements

During maternity and/or parental leave the current legal provisions shall apply. The end of the project will be shifted accordingly. After prior consultation with the Foundation, part-time employment combined with a proportional project prolongation is possible. If during parental leave and with the prior consent of the Foundation it is considered indispensable for achieving the project targets, an appropriate replacement (e.g. research assistant) may be hired. Any additional costs thereby incurred may be claimed in a substantiated post-application, always assuming a cost-neutral budget reallocation is not possible.

3. Child care costs

An allowance for child care may be paid from the grant for children no older than twelve. The amount depends on the number of children and is set as follows: For a single child **EUR 400** per month. For each additional child the allowance is increased by EUR 100 per month.

Prerequisite for granting these additional funds to cover the costs of childcare is that the child/children in question are looked after in a state-recognized childcare facility. However, it is not possible to deduct the cost of meals consumed at the facility from the funds provided by the Foundation. The payroll costs, income tax and social insurance contributions are included in the above-mentioned amounts and can therefore not be claimed additionally. Please note that under the provisions of § 3 subsection 1 Nr. 33 des Einkommenssteuergesetzes [German law governing income tax] supplementary payments for childcare are not subject to income tax. According to the law, taxes are not levied on supplementary payments made by the employer for the care of employees' children under school age in kindergartens or similar childcare facilities. Applicants should clarify whether the conditions for tax exemption are met by contacting their respective HR department.

Vouchers must be submitted to evidence the costs incurred by child care. Applicants undertake to inform the Foundation immediately and of their own accord about any changes in the number of eligible children during the course of the project. In the event that both parents or guardians are funded by the Foundation only one child allowance shall be paid.

4. Research stays abroad

Within the context of funding initiatives involving longish research stays in another country (minimum six months) the Volkswagen Foundation may assume the costs of flights for grantees as well as return flights for children and the grantee's partner. Alternatively, in the event that the grantee travels alone, it is possible to apply for one return trip home during the period of stay.

The costs of foreign health insurance and any necessary visas can likewise be assumed for family members.

Under certain circumstances, it may also be possible to apply for a rent subsidy. However, applicants should first check whether the foreign host institution is able to provide more reasonably priced accommodation. Should that not be the case, applicants should submit their rental contract with an accordant application for funding. Depending on the foreign destination in question, rent subsidies of up to max. EUR 1,000 may be available (persons traveling alone) or EUR 1,500 if family is included.

In principle for childcare abroad the same conditions apply as listed under 3 above.

5. Application procedure

In order that the HR costs are correctly budgeted for, the childcare allowance must be applied for at the same time as the written project proposal is submitted. In case a child is born or adopted into the family while the project is running, a reallocation of funds in order to cover partial child care expenses shall be deemed approved. If required, a subsequent application may be posted towards the end of the project. Please indicate the name(s) and date(s) of birth of your child or children in the application documents (e.g. in the CV) and list the appropriate allowance separately under personnel in your budget.

If you feel there should be a further modification of the project organization to achieve a better work-life balance for researchers with children which requires approval by the Foundation and/or is not listed here, please contact the program manager responsible for your application at the Foundation's office.

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