International Mobility Fund for Outstanding Early-Career Researchers

Objectives:

International research experience and scientific networking are central components of successful academic career paths. Nevertheless, international research stays in early career phases are often not realized, for example due to family obligations, short contract durations, or limited time flexibility within existing research structures.

The International Mobility Fund therefore supports outstanding early-career researchers who are currently funded within the career track of Ulm University Medicine (Baustein, Hertha-Nathorff, Medical and Clinician Scientists) in carrying out short international research stays. The aim of the program is to promote international mobility, the acquisition of new methods, and the establishment of international collaborations at an early stage and thereby strengthen the scientific independence and competitiveness of early-career researchers after completing their doctorate

Funding concept:

The International Mobility Fund supports short stays abroad of up to three months for researchers funded in the Ulm career track. The goal is to enable them to acquire new methods, establish international collaborations, and integrate into internationally visible research environments. The program aims to strengthen international research stays as an integral part of academic career development and to promote international networking at an early stage.

Scope of funding:

The program funds research stays of up to three months at international host institutions. Within the framework of the applicable travel cost regulations, the faculty generally covers the necessary travel and accommodation expenses up to an amount of 15,000 EUR per stay. Reimbursement is provided in accordance with the Baden-Württemberg State Travel Expenses Act (Landesreisekostengesetz Baden-Württemberg, LRKG) as well as the applicable per diem and overnight allowances for foreign travel.

Reimbursable are necessary travel and accommodation expenses as well as, where applicable, additional costs directly related to the research stay, insofar as this is permissible under travel expense regulations. The funding is provided as a supplement to the regular salary of the funded researchers. Separate funding opportunities are available for conference travel. Material costs cannot be covered.

Target group:

Early-career researchers who are funded within the career track of Ulm University Medicine (Baustein, Hertha-Nathorff, Clinician and Medical Scientist) and are planning a targeted stay abroad for methodological training or for initiating international collaborations.

Application and Selection:

Each year, the faculty allocates funds in the total amount of 100,000 EUR for the International Mobility Fund. For the application, a one-page motivation letter is required, including information on the applicant and the host laboratory, the planned activities/objectives, and the added value for the applicant's career and for Ulm University Medicine. The application documents must include a brief confirmation from the host laboratory and an endorsement from the home institution.

The scientific excellence of the applicants has already been confirmed through their admission to the Ulm career track; therefore, the decision on funding is made by the Vice Dean for Research. The following criteria are particularly relevant for the decision:

- Scientific added value of the stay
- Contribution to career development
- Expected establishment of international collaborations
- Methodological gain

Applications can be submitted at any time. After completion of the stay, the funded researchers provide a brief report to the Vice Dean for Research on the success of the stay and whether the objectives and added value stated in the application have been achieved. The administrative handling is carried out as for regular business trips; the faculty covers the costs.

Expected benefits:

The International Mobility Fund closes the gap between traditional mobility funding, conference travel, and family obligations, strengthens the international visibility of young researchers, and thus supports the sustainable development of independent scientific profiles. In doing so, the program enhances the international networking of Ulm University Medical Center, supports the establishment of long-term scientific collaborations, and increases the competitiveness of young researchers in acquiring external funding. At the same time, the program helps to establish international research stays as a natural component of academic career development in early career phases.