Medical Scientist Program
of the Medical Faculty of Ulm University

Guidelines, funding period 2027/30

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1. Objective of the program

Support of excellent postdocs (clinical postdocs are excluded) whose career goal is to qualify for appointment to W2/W3 professorships. The program is aimed at postdocs with initial experience (at the earliest three years after completion of the doctorate) who wish to take an important career step at the institutions of university medicine in the fields of biomedical and molecular medicine.

2. Eligibility to apply

In general, the following applies to the early-career programs of the Medical Faculty:
All researchers with a completed university degree (e.g. medicine, natural sciences, psychology) at institutions according to the structure defined in §8 in the annex to the statutes of the Ulm University Medical Center (UKU), who fulfil a mandate for research and teaching (F&L) for the Medical Faculty of Ulm University, are eligible to apply for the early-career funding programs of the Medical Faculty. This includes all institutions that you can select in the application portal under “Einrichtung” (institution).
Researchers employed at institutes of the University whose head of institution is co-opted with the Medical Faculty are also eligible to apply. The prerequisite is that, in these cases, 50% of the funding amount regularly provided by the Medical Faculty is borne by the co-opted institution.
Applicants from external hospitals that are exclusively active in teaching for the Medical Faculty, e.g. as teaching hospitals, are not eligible to apply.

Specifically for the Medical Scientist Program, the following also applies:
Within the framework of the Medical Scientist Program, among other things, the applicant’s own position is funded. This presupposes that the funded person must be in an employment relationship with the state during the funding period. For the Medical Faculty, the UKU acts within the framework of personnel and financial administration. If there is no employment relationship with the University or the Medical Faculty, the funded persons must conclude an employment contract with the Medical Faculty for the duration of the funding and suspend their original contract (e.g. with hospitals with an external sponsor) for this period. No reimbursement of personnel costs will be made.
If you are working in an institution that is eligible to apply but are currently not in an employment relationship with the University or the Faculty of Medicine, please contact the MSP

Coordination Office and the Human Resources Department at an early stage in order to discuss possible implications of a new employment contract in good time.

3. Requirements/admission criteria

- Doctorate: Dr. rer. nat., PhD or equivalent
- Entry into the program at the earliest 3 years after the doctorate (i.e. minimum experience as a post-doc is required)
- Change of institution after the doctorate, possibly with international experience, should be the rule
- Experience in research demonstrated by relevant publications and acquired external third-party funding
- Convincing scientific project including a milestone plan
- One supervisor each from basic research and clinical-translational research, as well as a personal, independent mentor
- Co-financing by the institution (see section 8)
- Funding of part-time positions with a working time of at least 50% is fundamentally possible.

4. Curriculum

- The program is designed for a total maximum of 6 years with an interim evaluation in the 3rd year (3+3 years).
- It is linked to the events of the Ulm Clinician Scientist Programs:
    - 1 annual progress report in written form and one presentation per year within the framework of the Spring/Fall Meetings of the Graduate School IGradU or the CSP/MSP Retreats
    - Bi-weekly research and literature seminar in the home department
    - 1 own literature seminar in the departments of the mentors
    - 10 talks per year by external speakers within the framework of lecture series
    - A total of 2 additional activities per year from the areas of mini symposia, retreats, and transferable skills seminars (e.g. project management, leadership, time and conflict management etc.)[1]
    - Participation in the CSP/MSP retreats (usually annually)
    - **Interim evaluation** in the third year (after approx. 2 years and 6 months) with submission of an interim report and presentation to the CSP/MSP Board
    - **Final report** (at the latest six months after the end of funding) indicating publications produced, conference contributions (posters and presentations), and third-party funds acquired
    - Submission of progress reports as well as interim and final reports is to be carried out via the application portal of the Medical Faculty in future.

5. Decision-making procedures

- Two-stage application procedure:
  1. Stage: Submission of written application documents
  2. Stage: Presentation of the projects by the preselected candidates by means of a talk followed by discussion
    - Reviewing body: Clinician-/Medical Scientist Board
    - Evaluation criteria:
        - Originality and innovative potential of the proposed project
        - Previous work and potential of the applicant
        - Feasibility within the research group and overall realizability
        - Perspective (including subsequent acquisition of third-party funding; continued career of the applicant in science/pursuit of a scientific career)
        - Ability to discuss and argue, critical thinking

[1] A corresponding range of courses is provided by the IGradU and/or the early-career academy ProTrainU and will be expanded/adapted according to the wishes/needs of the program participants.

- The decision on admission to the MSP is made by the Faculty's Executive Board on the recommendation of the Clinician-/Medical Scientist Board.

6. Certificate

- A certificate of successful participation will be issued if the stated achievements have been fulfilled and documented and at least one first- or last-author publication (original research paper) has been produced during participation in the MSP.

7. Number of positions to be funded

- As a rule, a maximum of **three** Medical Scientist positions per call can be financed from funds of the Medical Faculty.
- Participation of additional candidates with external funding (without financial contribution from the Faculty of Medicine) is possible. This number of participants is not limited, but these participants have no entitlement to additional resources (e.g. doctoral candidate position, consumables/travel funds).

8. Scope of funding/financing model

- Funding within the Medical Scientist Program comprises:
  - Medical Scientist position, depending on classification, at 50% (TV-L E13) or 40% (TV-L E14)
  - One doctoral candidate position (in exceptional cases a technical assistant (TA) position)
  - Consumables amounting to €5,000 per year
  - Mobility program amounting to €1,000 per year for attending conferences etc. (prerequisites are a continuous MSP participation of 12 months and active participation in the conference etc.). Unspent travel funds are transferred to the following year.
- Co-financing by the respective institution is expected as shown in the table below.

⇒ In years four to six, Medical Scientist positions classified in E13 will be upgraded to TV-L E14 once the relevant collective agreement requirements are met. In order to ensure that the respective institution does not incur additional costs, the E14 position will then be financed 60% by the Medical Faculty and 40% by the respective institution.

	Years 1 - 3	**Years 4 - 6**
Medical Faculty	• Medical Scientist position (50% TV-L E13 oder 40% TV-L E14) • PhD-position (65% TV-L E13) or TA position (TV-L E8) • Consumables: 5.000 €/year • Travel funds: 1.000 €/year	• Medical Scientist position (60% TV-L E14) • PhD position (65% TV-L E13) or TA position (TV-L E8) • Consumables: 5.000 €/year • Travel funds: 1.000 €/year
Respective Institution	• Medical Scientist position (50% TV-L E13 oder 60% TV-L E14) • Consumables: 10.000 €/year • Travel funds: 1.000 €/year	• Medical Scientist position (40% TV-L E14) • Consumables: 10.000 €/year • Travel funds: 1.000 €/year

9. Application modalities

- For planned investigations involving humans/animals, the MSP application must include the **ethics committee approval or proof of submission of the ethics application / approval of the animal experiment application or proof of submission of the animal experiment application**. It is at the discretion of the Clinician-/Medical Scientist Board to decide to what extent a "merely" submitted ethics or animal experiment application is accepted as sufficient for funding within the MSP.
- **Simultaneous application** and **concurrent double funding** from early-career funding programs of the Medical Faculty and Ulm University, which serve the same funding objective, as well as for the Clinician Scientist Program and the Baustein Program, are **excluded**.
- Parallel funding within the framework of the "International Mobility Fund" of the Medical Faculty is possible.
- Please observe the formal requirements! Applications with formal deficiencies are excluded from review.

Applications can be submitted via the **application platform of the Medical Faculty** **until January 7, 2027**.

Further information, deadlines and access to the application platform can be found at the Homepage.

The planned start of funding is May 1, 2027. A decision on funding will be made on the recommendation of the Clinician-/Medical Scientist Board by the Faculty's Executive Board, presumably in its meeting in March 2027.

10. Coordination and organization

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