

### I. Objective

The programme promotes the establishment of Einstein Centers, which allow Berlin-based research alliances to build innovative cross-institutional research collaborations in Berlin. Einstein Centers provide a setting that serves to catalyse the potential of interdisciplinary research being conducted in cutting-edge areas of investigation in order to establish research hubs with international visibility. They act as platforms that bring together projects and initiatives delivering pioneering research and forging fresh approaches to promoting early career researchers in fields that are key to enhancing Berlin's international profile as a leading science and research hub. The Centers explore innovative, future-relevant research questions and conduct pioneering projects, drawing on cutting-edge methods to expand disciplinary frontiers.

The programme gives applicants the freedom to probe and implement their own concepts and approaches. As nodal points, Einstein Centers help eligible research alliances pursue specific objectives based on their respective priorities, such as:

- providing strategic support for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers engaged in interdisciplinary collaboration,
- establishing an Einstein Center as a forum to enhance exchange between Berlin-based researchers and visiting researchers from abroad via Visiting Fellowships and sabbaticals,
- moving forward with a project that plans to develop, explore, and implement new standards that will benefit relevant meta-themes driving research in Berlin (such as innovative teaching formats, career support, science communication, the transfer of technology as well as industry collaborations, leadership, and mentoring),
- strengthening or creating a new field of research that is embedded in a long-term strategy designed to enhance Berlin's international profile as a leading science and research hub,
- creating a platform that enables several Berlin universities and non-university research institutes to collaborate on a specific theme,
- building a research alliance that embraces participatory research and co-created knowledge by working with stakeholders from various sectors (business, industry, culture, and society),
- establishing a hub which, building on both tried-and-trusted and experimental formats, makes new inroads into science communication and knowledge transfer,
- setting up an Einstein Center as an incubator that strategically supports research fields in building new research alliances to secure follow-on funding at the end of the six-year grant period provided by the Einstein Foundation.

### II. ELIGIBILITY

Applications can be submitted by Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, Universität der Künste, and Charité – Universitätsmedizin, of which at least two must be involved in the submission, along with further Berlin-based non-university research institutions. Applying institutions are encouraged to request prior funding

for an Einstein Circle (see the respective programme information leaflet) in order to facilitate their application for an Einstein Center.

### III. FUNDING

The Center's main objectives should be reached within a maximum of six years. Funding can be used to carry out specific research projects or create an adequate institutional framework for such a project. In particular, resources will be granted for:

- costs for scientific staff and, to a limited extent, for non-research and technical support staff,
- material expenses, including expenses for travel, guest accommodation, and Open Access publications,
- investments in equipment (excluding construction).

Funding can be requested for up to €1 million annually and may be combined with co-funding from private sources (public-private partnership) to increase the Center's budget. Applicants considering setting up such a public-private partnership are advised to consult with the Foundation's headquarters at an early stage of the application process.

### IV. FUNDING PERIOD

Funding is provided for a maximum of six years. The initial funding period is three years. Applicants may request an extension for a subsequent three-year period of funding at the beginning of the third year. The respective research alliance will hold the title of "Einstein Center" for the duration of the funding. Should an Einstein Center secure third-party funding, the Einstein Foundation will terminate its support with immediate effect once the acquired third-party funding is released.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications from all disciplines are welcome and can be submitted by the deadlines announced on the Foundation's website. Application reviews will be conducted in the form of on-site visits by an international expert group. The Foundation may need up to eight months to notify applicants of its decision. If a public-private partnership is set up, the partners are expected to provide funding commitments to secure the first funding period.

Applications are to be submitted in **English**.

In the application, the heads of the institutions submitting the funding request must highlight how the Einstein Center will enhance the profile of their respective institutions and Berlin's science and research environment in general. Applications must also detail the financial support provided by each institution involved. Please seek advice early prior to preparing your submission. The relevant contact details can be found below. Please refer to the application form including the application instructions, which can be found on the Foundation's website.

The application must contain:

- an outline of the proposed Center and its objectives, with a focus on the application's innovative thrust and profile,
- a list of the Center's initiators, including their short CVs, institutional affiliation, and prospective function at the Center,
- details regarding envisioned inter- and transdisciplinary collaborations, as well as examples of ongoing collaborations among the initiators and their research outcomes,
- an outline of the proposed Center's role in enriching Berlin's science and research environment, including an overview of preliminary research as well as existing and prospective foci of the Center's interinstitutional research strategy),
- a description of the proposed Center's foci and subprojects as well as its research programme, including its specific objectives and methods,
- a detailed timeline containing clearly defined and measurable objectives to be achieved per funding year and until the interim report is due,
- a description of the proposed Center's governance structures (including the internal competition-based mechanisms through which funding is distributed, if relevant) and the institutional support provided by the host universities or Charité – Universitätsmedizin and the non-university institutes,
- a detailed annual budget plan specifying and justifying all co-funding received from the participating institutions and third parties, if applicable,
- a document outlining the Center's equal opportunities and diversity policies, including binding, clearly defined, and measurable objectives,
- depending on the Center's profile: if applicable, a description of planned international collaborations and/or proposals for collaborative research initiatives; career support measures; efforts to enhance the quality of research and teaching; a public-private partnership concept (including letters of intent from the potential industry partner), prospective outreach, co-creation, knowledge transfer, or stakeholder engagement formats, etc.,
- a contact person.

## VI. USE OF FUNDS

Grants from the Foundation are disbursed through the budget of the host university or Charité – Universitätsmedizin as third-party funding. These institutions will act as employer of the individuals funded by the Einstein Foundation's grant. If a cooperation partner is involved in the project, the share of funding assigned to the partner institution will be made available by the host institution. Persons paid from these forwarded funds will be employed by the partner institution.

# Programme Information

## Einstein Center

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