

JSMC Career Orientation Grants

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Program to aid outstanding JSMC graduates in finding a position

A limited number of grants are available to outstanding graduates of the JSMC PhD Training. The grants aim to provide support at the challenging stage **directly following successful completion of the PhD**.

Who can apply?

The call is open to **all recent JSMC Doctoral Graduates and Doctoral Candidates** (officially admitted to the JSMC) who have already submitted their thesis. Applications for grant schemes A)-E) can be submitted in the time frame **between the date of submission of the PhD thesis (please provide a copy of receipt) up to 3 months after the date of the PhD defense**. The JSMC Career Orientation Grants aim to support excellent JSMC Newly-Graduates with their first career step and require financial support. Applicants must show in their grant application that they will take a distinct step forward in either A) their scientific independence from their PhD supervisors*, B) change of their academic research field, C) an outstanding research position in industry, D) an otherwise excellent career opportunity (including but not limited to an internship in science journalism, science management at the JSMC, etc.) or E) a visit of a renowned research group abroad.

*Research positions, internships, etc. in and outside Europe are acceptable. A mere continuation of the research project conducted during the PhD studies will in principle not be funded.

Grant Schemes

A-D) Half-year Scholarships

Financial support for up to 6 months after successfully completing the PhD to support a subsequent career in academia or industry. The monthly fellowship allowance (tax-free) is 1,750 € based on the German Research Foundation (DFG) regulations. Supplementary allowance for fellowship holders with children: 400 € per month for the first child plus 100 € more for each additional child.

E) Grant for International Laboratory Visit

A one-time travel grant to visit an international laboratory to identify the best possibilities for postdoctoral positions. Travel expenses (transportation + accommodation costs) will be reimbursed up to the amount of a total of 2,000 € per grant (based on receipts).

Awarding Criteria

The successful awardees will be outstanding JSMC graduates. Among the most important selection criteria are:

- A. Timely completion of the doctorate (max. 4 years)
- B. Successful PhD project with substantial scientific output
- C. Activities committed at and for the JSMC
- D. Proposal Quality

For detailed application guidelines, please see below.

Applications for all grant schemes are possible at any time.

Awarding decisions will be made by the Executive Board. The funding can be utilized by the awardee immediately following the awarding decision, however (in case of the postdoctoral scholarship) not prior to having successfully defended the PhD thesis. All scholarships have to be started within a maximum of 4 months following the thesis defense. The laboratory visit grants have to be used within 2 months following the defense (a binding plan on the expenses has to be provided to the JSMC Office as soon as possible).

Application Guidelines

In your application, please follow the structure below:

Basic information

Your name (first name, family name):

Names of the members of your PhD thesis committee:.....

Grant Scheme you are applying for (A-E):.....

A. Efficient completion of the doctorate

Timely completion of the doctorate is one of the important criteria for the selection of awardees. Typically, a duration of the doctorate of a maximum of 4 years is considered timely by the selection committee (if the project is successful based on the criteria listed in paragraph B).

PhD project starting date:

Dissertation submission date:

(Expected) Date of PhD defense:

Did you conduct research in the group of your PhD supervisor prior to actually starting your PhD project? (y/n) If yes, please specify.

B. Successful PhD project

Evaluation of your success will be based on the scientific output of your PhD project. This will (predominantly) be appraised based on the quality and quantity of your publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals (including book chapters), patent applications, oral conference contributions, etc. Please provide a list of the following:

- 1) List of peer-reviewed publications on which you are listed as an author (including manuscripts in preparation for peer-reviewed scientific journals)
 - please clearly state the current publication status (in preparation / submitted / under review / published)
 - only list manuscripts in preparation if at least a first complete draft (including all sections) exists. Please append this draft to your application
 - successful applicants will have at least two manuscripts submitted and one in a final stage of preparation at the time of submitting their application
- 2) List of oral conference contributions resulting from your PhD project. Please list talks held by you, only.
- 3) List of your research stays in external laboratories in the course of your PhD.
- 4) List of other outstanding achievements resulting from their PhD research (e.g. publication prizes, patent applications etc.)

C. Activities committed to the JSMC

Activities committed to and at the JSMC during your PhD are taken into account for the awarding decision (e.g. participation in the MiCom conference organization, mentoring international PhD candidates, newsletter/outreach teamwork, etc.). Please outline your activities, not exceeding 1,000 characters (including spaces).

D. Proposal

Describe how you are planning to use the respective JSMC Career Orientation Grant (if awarded to you). Please limit your outline to a maximum of 4,000 characters (including spaces).

Half-year Scholarships (A-D)

Please, describe the activities you are planning during the 6-months funding period to support your career (e.g., career-shift, fellowship/grant/job applications, internships, lab visits, conference participations, manuscript writing, experiments...). For a successful application, your ideas on how to make use of the extra time funded by the JSMC must be innovative and novel as opposed to the research you conducted during your PhD. The 'Postdoc period' is exceptionally important for your further career path. Describe those future career steps you are aiming for and how you plan to utilize the 6-months funding period in your orientation and preparation for these steps in a successful career.

Grants for International Laboratory Visits

In your proposal, please provide a list of the laboratories you intend to visit, respectively including information on

- why did you select this particular lab / how does the lab visit fit with the future career steps you are aiming for?
- earlier collaborations with members of this lab
- the anticipated duration of your stay
- your contact person to guide you there
- activities you are planning to get to know the lab during your visit

Please enclose invitation letters of the heads of each of the laboratories you intend to visit, confirming their willingness to host you in the scheduled period (copies of invitation emails are sufficient).

Please note that within this grant scheme, evidenced travel expenses (economy class transportation + accommodation) will be reimbursed based on the travel expense regulations of the Free State of Thuringia. The maximum amount that can be reimbursed per awardee is 2,000 €.

E. Concise a professional curriculum vita (max. 2 pages)

JSMC Career Orientation Grants - Conditions

The awarding of the JSMC Career Orientation Grant is based on the information provided in the grant proposal submitted by the applicant. The scholarship holder is, therefore, obliged to immediately inform the JSMC Office about any changes to the plans outlined there. Further, the scholarship holder is obligated to inform the JSMC Office about changes in their personal or financial circumstances so that the JSMC can adjust the stipend amount accordingly.

Scholarships awarded by the JSMC do not constitute any form of employment. In Germany (EstG §3 No. 44) and in countries that maintain a double-taxation agreement with Germany, scholarships are exempt from tax. A scholarship is not considered to be remuneration as defined by Article 14 of the German Social Law IV and is therefore not liable to social insurance. Provision of laws governing the formation of capital, saving premiums, and residential building premiums do not apply. The JSMC does not provide any kind of insurance for the scholarship holders, i.e., the recipients must insure themselves and their families against any possible costs and consequences caused by illness, accident, personal liability, etc.

JSMC reserves the right to reclaim any surplus payment or money paid in error. Furthermore, the JSMC may cancel the scholarship and demand repayment if the scholarship was obtained under false pretenses or is not used for its intended purpose.

To process the scholarship holders' applications and to provide continuous support, the JSMC gathers and electronically stores the data submitted by applicants. These data include personal information as well as information on the career-promoting activities described in the grant application and the support granted.

JSMC Orientation Grant holders are members of the Graduate School JSMC (JSMC Alumni). JSMC aims to promote networking between its Alumni as well as between the Alumni and the current Doctoral Researchers. Scholarship holders will be asked to provide information for this, which will be made available to the other members in internal databases, newsletters, social media, and publications. Basic member data is also shown on the publicly accessible [JSMC website](#). At the end of the grant period, each scholarship holder is expected to write a **brief experience report** (1 page) on how he/she made use of the grant-funded time for career promotion (this report may also be published by JSMC). Submission of a photo(s) of and by the scholarship holder and permission for the JSMC to publish/use any photos and information is expected.

Please note that by accepting JSMC funding (including JSMC career orientation grants), you agree to **acknowledge the JSMC in forthcoming publications and conference contributions** resulting from work conducted during your JSMC funding period. Please acknowledge us by using the following:

- Publications: “We acknowledge support by the Jena School for Microbial Communication (JSMC) that is third-party funded by the Thuringian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (TMBWK).”
- Posters and talks: kindly use the JSMC and TMBWK logos that you can find here

Scholarships

The 6-months funding is intended to cover the living expenses of the recipient. It may therefore not be held while receiving a regular personal income from any other institution or research institute.

The amount of the monthly scholarship allowance is 1,750 € based on the regulations by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Supplementary allowance for scholarship holders with children: 400 € per month for the first child plus 100 € more for each additional child.

Laboratory visit travel grants

The Laboratory visit grants are intended to provide funding for visits to international laboratories in order to identify the best possibilities for future postdoctoral positions. The grant exclusively covers customary travel expenses (transportation + accommodation costs; Economy class). All other expenses, such as living costs, research-related expenses, etc. must be covered either by the scholarship holder themselves or by other sources.

Expenses that are covered by the JSMC Career Orientation Grant will be reimbursed by JSMC upon original receipts. An advance payment can be made upon request. The maximum total to be reimbursed per grant is € 2,000. The travel grant expires if not taken up within 4 months following its awarding.