



MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT

# A career in science at Max Planck

A guide to  
career advancement with equal opportunities



04

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## What matters to us

Tomorrow's researchers,  
young, from anywhere in the world,  
excellent

---

10

---

## Career

**We will support your career**

**Offers for doctoral students**

**Offers for postdocs**

**Offers for Group Leaders**

---

30

---

## Opportunities

### Offers for female scientists

- **Funding programmes**  
Minerva Fast Track Programme
  - **Mentoring network I**  
Minerva FemmeNet
  - **Mentoring network II**  
Elisabeth Schiemann Kolleg
  - **Seminars / Coaching**  
Sign up! Career building
  - **Buying time with money**  
Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard  
Foundation
  - **Internet portal**  
AcademiaNet
- 

36

---

## Career and family life

### Everything in balance

- **Children and career, family  
and research**
  - **Always safe and sound**  
Childcare
  - **When help is needed**  
Family service
  - **Guidelines**  
Pregnancy and maternity protection
  - **International Officers /  
Dual Career networks**  
Getting started in Germany
-

# young, from anywhere in the world, excellent

Tomorrow's  
researchers

- You are creative, curious, determined, and passionate about basic research?
- You are keen on living in Germany and an inspiring cultural environment?
- You are looking forward to conducting research in an international environment?

## Three Yeses?

Then you've come to the right place in the Max Planck Society! Come and join us. The 84 Max Planck Institutes and research facilities offer innovative jobs. Our institutes enjoy worldwide recognition and the Max Planck Society is one of the most attractive employers for many students, especially in the sciences – according to the Universum Student Survey 2017, Germany.



Around 23,000 people work and conduct research in the Max Planck Society. Almost 8,000 of them are early career researchers, i.e. over 40 per cent of the scientific workforce of the Max Planck Society. They are working on their doctorates, focusing on their postdoc phase or leading a research group. And more than half of them come from abroad.

Inquisitive, highly motivated and talented scientists form the basis for the success of the Max Planck Society. At the Institutes, they encounter an intellectually stimulating environment; globally networked mentors from whose experience, knowledge and networks they can benefit. And they find first-class technical facilities waiting for them. All doors are open to them after successfully completing this stage of their career. The Max Planck Society is a springboard for careers in the science and business arenas.

## What matters to us

### Career development at Max Planck

We care about supporting early career researchers. We are continuously refining our support structures for career paths, and we offer binding contracts of employment, even for the early stages of a career. Added to this are a wide assortment of qualification and further training offers, mentoring programmes, distinctions and networks. The rules and regulations governing good scientific practice naturally apply. This guarantees that our work together is conducted on an equal footing and is of high quality.

### Equal opportunities and diversity

Talent, creativity, and passion – those are the qualities we bank on in the Max Planck Society. We promote employees regardless of their gender, nationality, religion, disabilities, age, cultural origin or sexual orientation. Our diversity is the cornerstone of cutting-edge research at Max Planck Institutes. We are convinced that different roots, experience, career paths, and life situations are the drivers of creative ideas, new research methods and consequently of innovative results. That is why we want to offer an open, nurturing environment at our Institutes.



**Angela D. Friederici**

Vice President of the Max Planck Society and the Presidential Committee

*Young, talented men and women have many options and the best can choose their job. A job which reflects the modern lifestyle, changed realities of life and new working models.*

*If the Max Planck Society wishes to recruit from the best available talent, we will have to translate these realities of life into the everyday life of our Institutes. Only if the MPG offers men and women the same opportunities, we will be able to select from the entire pool of talent.*

**TVöD  
female scientists  
E13-E15Ü**

 2006  
**24.9%**

 2009  
**27.8%**

 2013  
**29.2%**

 2016  
**31.4%**
**W2  
female scientists**

 2006  
**21.6%**

 2009  
**27.1%**

 2013  
**27.8%**

 2016  
**34.6%**
**W3  
female scientists**

 2006  
**5.7%**

 2009  
**7.5%**

 2013  
**9.1%**

 2016  
**14.1%**

## What we do for greater equality of opportunity

The road to fairly distributed opportunities between men and women is still a long one – also in science and research. The figures clearly underline this: the higher the career level, the lower the proportion of women. This applies to the Max Planck Society and equally to the entire German science system. The phenomenon of the “leaky pipeline” takes effect particularly after the postdoc phase. The reasons are manifold: male dominated networks, the subliminal discrimination of women, a lack of female role models or fixed-term posts that hamper family planning as well as the continuing difficulty of reconciling family and research. Our aim is to counteract these factors.

**We optimize structures** by creating transparent and quality-securing processes.

**We work to bring cultures in step with the times** by offering equal opportunities in career advancement to support scientists.

**We improve the underlying conditions** by promoting the reconciliation of family life and career.

Our aim is for everyone, irrespective of their gender, to be able to obtain qualifications and reach higher career levels without encountering any gender-specific barriers.

Equal opportunities and diversity are elemental building blocks of excellent cutting-edge research. That is the focus of the measures we implement. But a far-reaching change of culture is required to be successful on a sustainable basis – within the Max Planck Society, the science system and society.

*We want to raise the proportion of female scientists in our ranks on a sustainable basis.*

### Our voluntary commitment

We want to increase the proportion of female scientists in our ranks on a sustainable basis. We have therefore defined a voluntary commitment for the third time in succession: Posts becoming vacant are filled with a view to internally defined quotas. The two previous voluntary commitments gave us a boost in tackling the subject of equal opportunities, and they showed that it works. We were able to double the proportion of female scientists on the two top management levels. If you want to recruit from a sufficiently large pool of top researchers on a managerial level over the long term, you must pay particular attention to promoting talented female researchers on the career levels below.

**In our rules** for appointing scientists to W2 positions (Group Leader posts), we have established how a competitive procedure is used to award them on a section level – a key prerequisite for ensuring a high scientific standard among the candidates. The participation of **Gender Equality Officers in the Sections** – no appointment is possible without their involvement – also guarantees that the potential of female scientists is reflected.

## Change of culture as a prerequisite

More women in leading functions also means more role models. In addition, a clear commitment from the management – in words and deeds – is fundamental in order to achieve a culture change throughout the Max Planck Society.

Equal opportunities and diversity are institutionally anchored in our organisation: in the permanent Presidential Committee on Opportunities and through the Central Gender Equality Officer who supports the Max Planck Society in implementing and refining its gender equality objectives. She also advises the internal target groups and the Gender Equality Officers at the Institutes. The latter are involved locally in all personnel, organisational and social measures relating to equality between men and women, the reconciliation of family life and work as well as protection from sexual harassment at the workplace.

Discrimination on the basis of gender is a problem throughout the world. By producing a guide to constructive interaction between male and female scientists, we want to hone awareness of subliminal discrimination and identify opportunities for how such – often subconscious – misconduct can be dealt with.

The commitment of management is just as important for achieving the change of culture at the Institutes as the inclusion of the scientific community. The series of events entitled Career Steps Opportunities which was designed as a roadshow, is aimed at everyone working in science in order to make them aware of the offers and programmes available at Max Planck facilities.

We want to make early career researchers from around the world feel welcome at the Max Planck Society and encouraged to see prospects and opportunities for their own research to unfold.



**Ulla Weber**

Central  
Gender Equality  
Officer

*With its Central Gender Equality Officer, the Max Planck Society is uniquely placed among all scientific institutions.*

*The fact that this function is 100 per cent devoted to the subject of equal opportunities, guarantees continuity of independent work to promote gender equality, good networking and professional collaboration with management, departments and the Institutes of the Max Planck Society, based on trust.*

# Career and opportunities



## We will support your career

The Max Planck Society supports young researchers on three career levels – doctoral students, postdocs and finally that of Research Group Leaders. Switching to a different laboratory, to a new scientific environment, often linked to moving to a different country, is commonplace in the world of science. It enables scientists to grow and make a name for themselves. The Max Planck Society therefore recruits new staff for each career level.

What matters to us is that at the end of each phase of your career, all doors are open to you – at research facilities, universities, public sector institutions or a wide variety of different sectors of industry around the world.

### This is what you can achieve with us:

- You will research for your doctorate under the best conditions and in a cosmopolitan environment. We work closely with universities which award doctorates, or you will take your doctoral degree at a university of your choice at home or abroad.
- In your postdoc phase, you will research independently under the supervision of an Institute Director or a Research Group Leader to further your qualifications and raise your profile on the international stage.
- As the scientific head of a Research Group, you will take on managerial responsibility. Together with your group, you can conduct in-depth independent research into a subject of your choice.

### Optimal conditions

On every career level, you will be working with internationally renowned, top-notch scientists. And you will benefit from the excellent infrastructure at our Institutes. Our contracts of employment and assistance agreements will give you the security to plan and develop your career. With our rules on doctoral training and the postdoc phase, we are creating transparency and setting new standards in the German science system. And we are constantly working to improve our individual career support.

### More than research

To work successfully, early career researchers need an inspiring environment and intensive supervision. At Max Planck Institutes, regular progress interviews and consultations are just as much part of this process as a specific range of research seminars and courses for acquiring key qualifications. Local EU offices will support you, if necessary, in all questions regarding EU research funding.

## Offers for doctoral students

### Get to know us beforehand

For us it is important from the outset to build a relationship of trust between the young scientist and their supervisor. By way of advance orientation, you have the chance to get to know the work of the department or research group in a kind of taster course. Early career researchers from abroad can come to the Institute for a while to find out if they would like to obtain their doctorate there and can find a suitable subject. We have set up 6-month guest scholarships for such instances.

Various Max Planck Institutes offer Summer Schools in the period free of lectures to enable junior academics to gain an insight into the world of research. The courses differ from Institute to Institute both in terms of their length and the focus of their subject matter. The size of the groups can vary depending on the main emphasis – and it is usual for participants to undergo a selection procedure.

[www.mpg.de/summerschool](http://www.mpg.de/summerschool)

### THREE MODELS FOR OBTAINING A DOCTORATE

## 1 International Max Planck Research Schools

### Structured training

If you want to establish a top-class network of contacts during your doctorate and benefit from structured training with a fixed curriculum, the International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS) represent an outstanding option for you.

There are currently more than 60 IMPRS. They are set up in each case by one or more Max Planck Institutes together with universities and other research facilities. Around half of the students come from abroad, the other half from Germany. They swap notes on a regular basis in workshops, summer schools or at conferences. The working language is English.

### Applications welcome

If you would like to obtain your doctorate at an IMPRS, please turn directly to the coordinator of the Research School that fits best with your scientific interest. You can find a list of all IMPRS at [www.mpg.de/de/imprs](http://www.mpg.de/de/imprs).

1

The Max Planck Institutes are door-openers – in many sectors throughout the world.

2

3

The **2,521** foreign doctoral students in 2016 came from 113 different countries.



## Individual doctorate

### Designing your own doctorate

At any one time, around 4,500 young people are researching for their dissertation at Max Planck Institutes – around half of them as part of an individual doctorate without being incorporated into any specific graduate programme such as the International Max Planck Research Schools.

During your doctorate, you can acquire numerous soft and technical skills. A university in Germany or abroad will award the doctorate; the majority of Max Planck Directors are tied to a university via an honorary professorship – often the one situated in the vicinity of the Institute.

### How do I apply?

Approach the Max Planck Institute or preferably turn directly to the Director or the Research Group Leader of your choice. They will decide which doctoral students to accept.

## Max Planck Schools

### Bundled excellence

The Max Planck Schools pool Germany's top scientists at a national level and beyond the boundaries of organisations, Institutes and faculties in a leading-edge research field. The target market is a small circle of highly talented, top international students who wish to pursue their training in a pretty broad field in terms of subject matter. They can also obtain their doctorate at the schools in a "fast track" procedure which includes a Master's degree. The degrees are awarded by the participating universities.

Three schools are launching a five-year pilot phase in 2018: the Max Planck School of Cognition, the Max Planck School of Photonics and the Max Planck School on Physics, Chemistry and Construction of Life. In all these pilot schools, joint attendance phases will be combined with independent research phases and distance learning formats. For example, the students and doctoral researchers will be given the chance to get to know different locations, research facilities and researchers, and following an initial orientation phase, to opt for the person and subject that most attract them from a scientific perspective.

### Your application

The curricula are to start in autumn 2019. The call-for-applications procedure is based on customary international application cycles, and starts in autumn 2018. After a strict selection procedure, acceptances will be issued in spring 2019. [www.maxplanckschools.de](http://www.maxplanckschools.de)

## MAX PLANCK SCHOOLS

### Max Planck Schools – A joint initiative between German universities and German research organisations

The Max Planck Schools are a joint, bottom-up initiative across different scientific organisations. The Federal Ministry of Research will support the three pilot schools selected in a competitive procedure by providing appropriate funding for a period of five years; the schools themselves are backed by members of 21 universities and 31 institutes belonging to non-university research organisations. The aim is to establish innovative educational and research networks in Germany which can compete with the top institutions in the world, and thus enhance Germany's international reputation as a research location.

## FUNDING

### Contracts for all doctoral students

#### Clear prospects

If you conduct research for your doctorate at a Max Planck Institute, you will receive a funding contract. This combines the scientific freedom of a scholarship with the social security of a contract of employment. It is concluded for a period of three years and can be extended by a further year.

The contractual working hours currently comprise 39 hours a week. Remuneration is based on the Collective Wage Agreement for the Civil Service (TVöD) and amounts to 50 per cent of pay group 13 TVöD. At the moment, this is a net amount of around 1,400 euros. You also have the social security benefits of health, accident, pension, and unemployment insurance. Added to this are an annual bonus and, under certain circumstances, a recruitment bonus. Research residencies at other institutions and abroad are also supported during your doctoral studies.



We offer you the best conditions and clear rules for your doctorate.

**21** Members of  
21 universities  
and **31**  
31 institutes  
of non-university  
research  
organisations

## WHAT'S WHAT

## Rules for doctoral students

**Regardless of the type of doctorate, there are binding rules in the Max Planck Society in order to offer early career researchers reliable, transparent structures for their training and career.**

## They include the following:

- Scientists usually will not look after more than eight doctoral students at the same time.
- The scope of the doctoral thesis is chosen to ensure that it can be completed within the average length of time for the subject: usually three years (plus option to extend by one year).
- Doctoral students regularly discuss the schedule for completing their dissertation with their chief supervisor.
- The funding contract commits to funding the entire length of the doctoral student's doctorate if the scientific performance meets expectations.
- As well as their main supervisor, all doctoral students are assigned a second independent scientist for support. They are also usually advised by a Thesis Advisory Committee.
- The supervisors encourage doctoral students to publish their research results even during their doctorate.
- Doctoral students are given the chance to turn to a local independent body during their training in the event of queries or differences of opinion.
- In its regular evaluations of the Institutes, the Scientific Advisory Board checks the quality of the academic training and whether the rules are being observed.
- The doctoral students receive support in furthering their professional qualifications, acquiring key skills and in gaining teaching experience if this is where their interests lie. Events such as peer coaching and self-organised retreats are also supported financially.

[www.mpg.de/guidelines-doctoral-training](http://www.mpg.de/guidelines-doctoral-training)

## AWARDS

## Otto Hahn Medal and Award

## For outstanding doctorates

Every year, the Max Planck Society awards the Otto Hahn Medal to the best young scientists for especially outstanding doctoral research. The medal comes with a prize money of 7,500 euros and is intended to motivate students to embark on a career in university teaching or research.

## Ticket abroad and back

Individuals who particularly distinguish themselves for a career in research already during their doctorate and who show signs of management qualities in the process, will also receive the Otto Hahn Award and with it the chance to lead their own research group. Initially, they will research as a postdoc for two years at a prestigious research facility abroad. Back in Germany, they will be given a W2 post for three years as well as their own funds to run an independent working group at a Max Planck Institute of their choice. There is an option to extend.

## Do I have a chance of winning a medal or award?

If you have completed your doctoral thesis before your 30th birthday, you can be proposed for the award by a Director of your Institute.



Since 1978, over 940 young scientists have been awarded the Otto Hahn Medal.

## AWARDS

## Dieter Rampacher Prize

Every year, in order to create an incentive for students to complete their doctorate early, the Max Planck Society honours its youngest doctoral students who complete their doctoral degree with outstanding work by awarding them the Dieter Rampacher Prize.

The prize, which is endowed with 2,400 euros, was sponsored in 1985 by Hermann Rampacher, a Supporting Member of the Max Planck Society; Carsten A. Rampacher, the son of the benefactor and also a Supporting Member of the MPG, took over the funding of the prize in 2011.

## → NETWORK

## Max Planck PhDnet

### Networking online and offline

The PhDnet network is open to all doctoral students at Max Planck Institutes. It was set up in 2003 to improve the training of doctoral students and interdisciplinary collaboration, promote scientific dialogue and reinforce academic solidarity. The network is organised in several working groups and an executive committee. The latter maintains a close dialogue with those responsible for career development and management of the Max Planck Society. Once a year, the elected PhD representatives meet to discuss objectives and strategies. Since 2012, they have also organised "Visions in Science" once a year, an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scientific meeting for doctoral students in the Max Planck Society.

You can swap notes with other doctoral students in the English language web portal. Or you can play an active role in a working group.

The PhDnet is part of N<sup>2</sup>. The non-university doctoral student networks of Helmholtz Juniors, Leibniz PhD Network and Max Planck PhDnet have united to form N<sup>2</sup> (N squared), thereby representing the interests of more than 14,000 doctoral students. The network aims to improve communication between individual representations and discuss common issues in order to make its voice heard on a political level.

[www.phdnet.mpg.de](http://www.phdnet.mpg.de)



More info on  
**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Minerva FemmeNet 33,  
Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard Foundation 34

p. 33

## Offers for postdocs

Conduct your own research,  
plan with an eye on the future

### Your work as a postdoc

As a postdoc at a Max Planck Institute, you will conduct your research largely independently under the supervision of the Directors or Research Group Leaders. In this phase, you should further your education and raise your profile through research projects, publications and residencies at prestigious institutes in your discipline. In the process, you will familiarise yourself with all aspects of independent, scientific work.

The aim of the postdoc phase is to set the stage for your further professional career. We encourage highly qualified young scientists to pursue an academic career. But it is also worthwhile considering other professional prospects, for example, in industry, science management or politics. Some may also consider starting their own business.

### How do I come by a postdoc post?

Postdoc positions are advertised in specialist magazines and listed in the Max Planck online job exchange. An application submitted to a Max Planck Institute of your choice on your own initiative can also lead to opportunities. Scientists at the relevant Institute will make the selection themselves. As a postdoc, you will receive a fixed-term employment contract, usually for a period of four years. Extensions are possible – every contract runs for as long as needed for the agreed project.

[www.mpg.de/stellenboerse](http://www.mpg.de/stellenboerse)

Well-endowed scholarships are also offered to postdocs from abroad to facilitate guest residencies at Max Planck Institutes.

### Offers of support

Progress interviews and individual reviews play an important role in the quality of training. Professionally advised by your academic supervisor and possibly by external career coaches, you can acquire specific scientific skills, gain managerial and teaching experience, analyse your own strengths and goals and realistically and actively plan your further career.

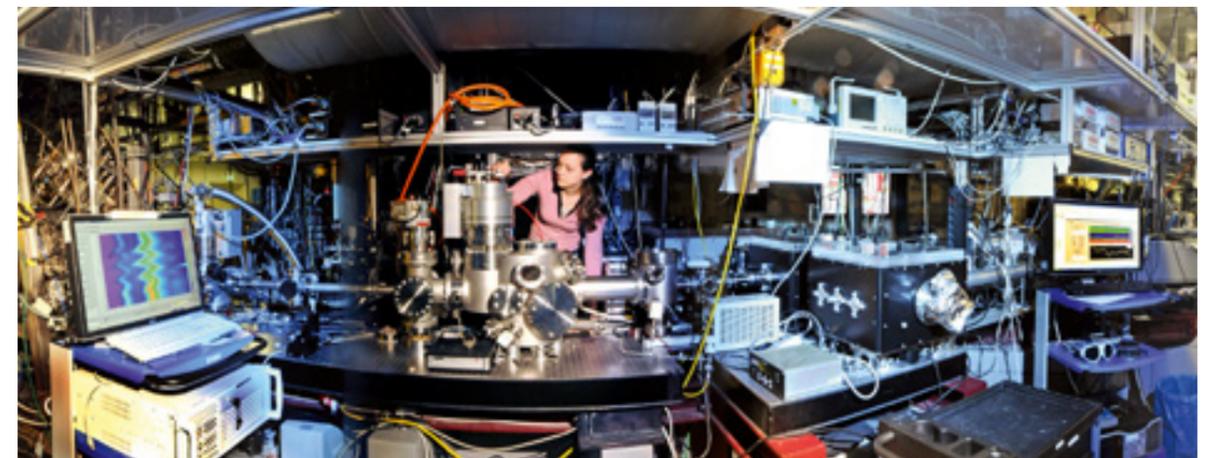
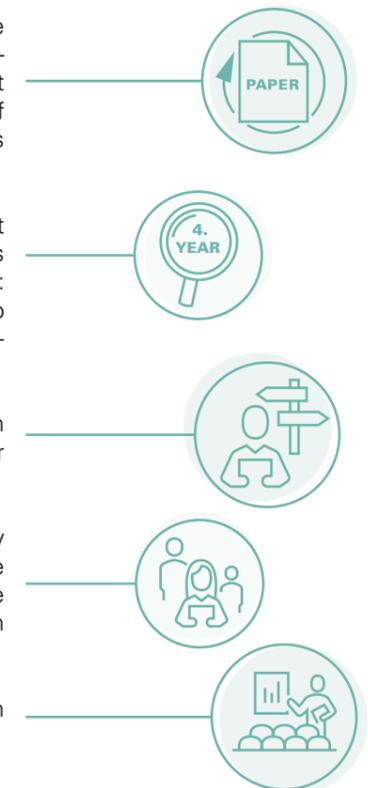
### WHAT'S WHAT

## Rules for the postdoc phase

The “Rules for the postdoc phase in the Max Planck Society” define high standards with regard to the quality of training and career advice. They provide for the following:

- After a binding discussion, the postdoc and their supervisor define the duration, content and framework conditions for the planned research work as well as possible training steps in a set of minutes. It is immaterial in the process whether the postdoc has a contract of employment or scholarship. Expectations, opportunities and options for working together are compared.
- After the fourth postdoc year at the latest, the supervisor will conduct an exhaustive review and must provide feedback on the postdoc's performance. Now the postdoc has to clarify the following question: Am I going to stay in science or not? For this reason it is important to obtain another opinion from an independent scientist on your potential career path.
- Max Planck gives postdocs the option of consulting an external coach to support their self-assessment with regard to their further career path alternatives.
- Charting a professional roadmap often coincides with starting a family in the postdoc phase. The Institutes therefore need more attractive offers which help to reconcile family life and work as well as more flexible conditions to counteract the shrinking proportion of women on higher career levels.
- When evaluating the Institutes, the Scientific Advisory Boards are in future to explicitly address the quality of postdoc support.

[www.mpg.de/guidelines-postdocs](http://www.mpg.de/guidelines-postdocs)



You can also use the outstanding infrastructure of our Institutes for your scientific work in the postdoc phase.

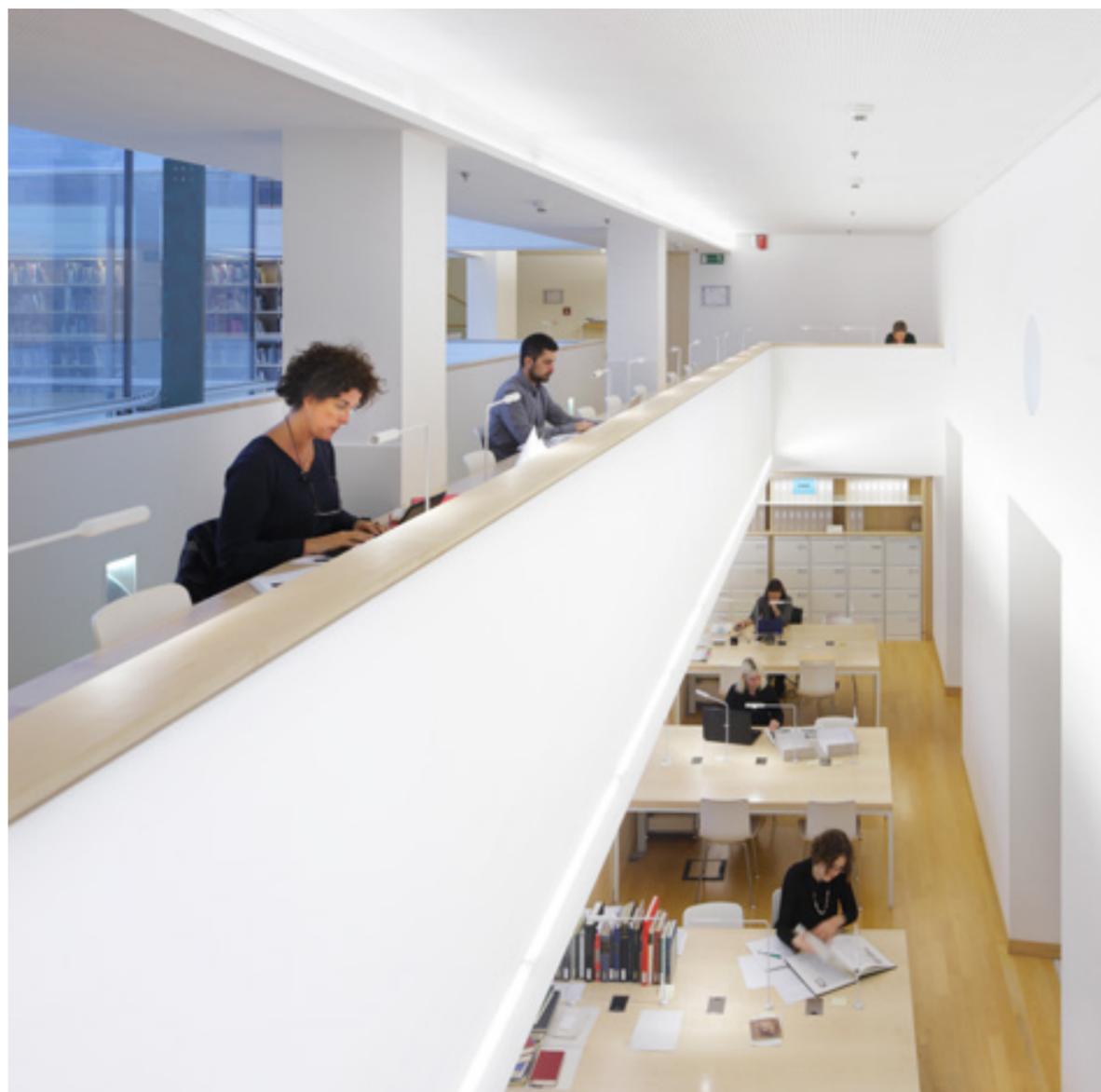
72%

of all postdocs  
come from abroad.  
One third of  
postdocs are  
female.

## → AWARDS

## Nobel Laureate Fellowship

Every year, the Nobel Prize winners in the Max Planck Society can award a "Nobel Laureate Fellowship" to an outstanding postdoc. Fellows are given a contract of employment in accordance with TVöD, initially for one year, as well as material resources for their research at a Max Planck Institute. They experience the research work of the Nobel Prize winner at first hand. They can also benefit from their excellent networks at home and abroad to further their careers.



We give you the space to explore where you want your future career to take you to.

## → SEMINARS/COACHING

## Postdoc seminar programme

**The Max Planck Society has developed a further education programme specially tailored to meet the needs of postdocs. It consists of three main substantive areas phased over time.**

### 1. Early postdoc phase

Teaching soft skills for scientists (presentation, project management, networking, pedagogical approaches to teaching, etc.), career planning.

### 2. Late postdoc phase

Teaching leadership and management skills, drawing up funding applications, strategic career planning with emphasis on science.

### 3. Mapping prospects

Support for professional orientation as well as analysis of career opportunities inside and outside science.

Each seminar lasts for one to two days, and they are mainly held in English. You can find further information on the Max Planck Society's intranet or from the Head of Administration of your Institute.

## → EVENT

## Career Steps for Postdocs in Academia and Industry

**"Career Steps" is the largest central event for postdocs in the Max Planck Society. It is held once a year, and the working language is English.**

The event is based on the idea that there is no conflict between training for excellent careers in science on the one hand and industry on the other, and that they complement each other. In seminars and working groups, the postdocs are given an overview of how they can operate in the academic employment market and at the same time take advantage of non-academic career opportunities. The benefits of training and coaching sessions for orientation are identified, the way in which they can help to steer one's own career in the right direction, is explored.



More info on  
**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Minerva Fast Track **32**, Minerva FemmeNet **33**,  
Elisabeth Schiemann Kolleg **33**, Sign up! Career building **34**,  
Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard Foundation **34**, AcademiaNet **35**



**Christopher Leon**

Postdoc at the  
Max Planck Institute  
for Solid State Research  
Stuttgart  
Nationality: Canadian

*As a Canadian-born Chinese postdoc educated in the United States, working abroad in Germany at the Max Planck Institute was a natural choice to make. Its researchers and support staff were instrumental in enabling the opportunities that I have today.*



**Hiba Babiker**

Postdoc at the  
Max Planck Institute  
for the Science of Human History,  
Halle  
Nationality: Sudanese

*Praise to the MPG for their policies and support to women in science. I am very proud working in such a society where the work environment is enthusiastic and family friendly, no matter where you come from or who you are.*

n. 32

## Offers for Group Leaders

### Springboard for an international career in science

Excellent early career researchers have the chance to lead a Research Group in the Max Planck Society. Within the Institutes, they are free to work on a subject of their choice in their field of research. There are various ways of attaining the leadership of a research group. On the one hand, for example, there are posts for Research Group Leaders appointed by the Max Planck Institutes acting on their own behalf. On the other, there are Max Planck Research Groups whose funds are allocated centrally and whose leaders are appointed by the President. The posts are awarded either by Max Planck Institutes after being advertised internationally, or as part of the annual, central call-for-applications in a competitive selection procedure.

#### THREE MODELS FOR MANAGERIAL POSITIONS

### 1 Research Groups

As a rule, every Max Planck Institute has posts for Research Group Leaders which have to be filled at a wide variety of junctures. The Institutes usually advertise these positions following their own procedures and in some cases internationally, and nominate a field of research in the process. There are no standard application deadlines for such positions; the staff and financial resources assigned vary according to the Max Planck Institute.

#### Your application

If you are interested, you can make contact with a Max Planck Institute of your choice. If your application at the Max Planck Institute of your choice was successful, you will be appointed by the Managing Director. You will usually be given a fixed-term contract of employment based on the Collective Wage Agreement for the Civil Service (TVöD).

@Sonja\_Vernes  
19. Sep.

Sonja Vernes

*This is an amazing opportunity I have been lucky enough to experience.*

*Apply now – it could change your life!*

#STEM  
#WomeninSTEM

@ibsneuro  
19. Sep.

Ina Bornkessel-Schl.

*I was fortunate enough to be awarded one of these back in 2005.*

*Amazing opportunity. Absolutely apply!!*

Max Planck Society

@maxplanckpress

Max Planck Society

*Apply now for a position as a Max Planck Research Group Leader! [bit.ly/2djZmgO](https://bit.ly/2djZmgO)*

#sciencecareer

#tenure

@maxplanckpress

@TU\_Muenchen

## 2 Max Planck Research Groups

Max Planck Research Groups form the centrepiece of our promotion of the next generation of scientists, as they offer top-class researchers the chance to build their own independent profile and take on managerial responsibility. If Max Planck Institutes have the appropriate budget, they can offer positions for Max Planck Research Group Leaders. In addition, the Max Planck Society further advertises such positions once a year on a central, open-topic basis – usually in autumn. Appointments to both institute-specific and centrally advertised positions are preceded by a strict, **centrally**-driven selection procedure.

#### Our offer

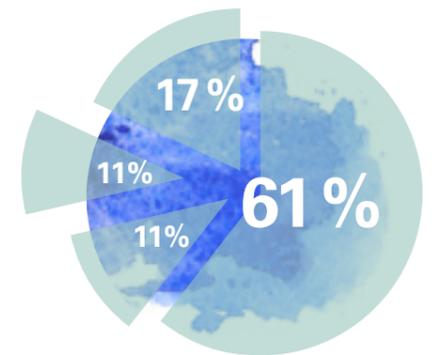
As the leader of a Max Planck Research Group, you will be given a W2 contract limited to five years which can be extended twice by two years, i.e. to a total length of nine years, if the evaluation is positive. With your Research Group, you can use the infrastructure of the particular Institute and also obtain your own staff and material resources. The leaders can use their discretion in deploying the resources approved. Notwithstanding your academic autonomy, the expectation is that you will take an active part in the life of the Institute.

#### Your application

The arrangements for applying for centrally advertised Max Planck Research Groups are explained on the Max Planck Society's website under the "Career" section. These Max Planck Research Groups are not subject to any thematic restrictions; applicants can specify three MPIs where they would like to work. Institute-specific positions are published in relevant specialist magazines and usually also on the website of the MPI concerned.

#### Collaboration with TU Munich

Lead a Max Planck Research Group and teach at a university of excellence as an Assistant Professor at the same time? And with clear career prospects on top? This is the opportunity presented by the programme offered by the Max Planck Society and the Munich Technical University (TUM) which is unique in Germany. If a scientist has been confirmed as the leader of an open-topic Max Planck Research Group, they can also take the entrance evaluation for the TUM's tenure track procedure, if they are interested. Excellent performance can be rewarded after six years with a permanent post as Associate Professor with a further option to advance to Full Professor.



**1970**  
According to internal statistics kept since 1970, 61% of all former Max Planck Research Group Leaders were able to pursue their career in a W2/W3 post at home or abroad; 11% were appointed as Max Planck Directors, 11% remained in an academic function at an MPI; 17% went to other research facilities or into industry.

## Lise Meitner Groups

### Outstanding career options for female scientists

From 2018, up to ten further Lise Meitner Groups will be advertised to recruit and promote exceptionally qualified female scientists as part of the new Lise Meitner Excellence Program. There will be a multi-stage, competitive selection process, held in close consultation with interested Max Planck Institutes. The Lise Meitner Groups are furnished with their own resources for their entire duration of five years.

### A position with prospects

Every new researcher in the Lise Meitner Excellence Program receives the offer to take part in the tenure track process, which – following a positive decision by the tenure committee – will lead to a permanent W2 post with group equipment.

Moreover, the Lise Meitner Excellence Program is aimed the future stars within a research field – at a very early stage in their scientific careers. Successful researchers will be included in the pool of outstandingly qualified candidates with the subsequent chance of becoming a director at a Max Planck Institute.

The Max Planck Society thus wants to identify and promote these outstanding talents and offer them transparent and attractive internal career perspectives. [www.mpg.de/lise-meitner-excellence-program](http://www.mpg.de/lise-meitner-excellence-program)



With our programmes, we aim to open doors for you and help you to advance your career.

### SEMINARS/COACHING

## Management Programme

The further education programme dedicated to the subject of management is specially tailored to your needs as the Leader of a Research Group or scientific project. It consists of three two-day seminar blocks spread over roughly a year. Participants learn how to recruit, structure and manage their team. They train their soft skills such as communicating, moderating, organising, and presenting, and learn how funding for scientific projects operates. The seminars are offered in German and English.

### Key skills

The programme teaches in condensed form all the skills you need besides your technical qualifications to run your research group responsibly and successfully. You can find further information on the MPG-wide intranet or from the Head of Administration of your Max Planck Institute.



**Ingo Barth**

Research Group Leader at the MPI of Microstructure Physics Halle

*To succeed as a scientist with a disability, you need a good network. My doctoral supervisor helped me to establish many contacts. For example, I have known the MPI Director Eberhard Groß since my time in Berlin. It is largely thanks to him that I was welcomed as a Research Group Leader.*

### NETWORK

## Max Planck LeadNet

### For talented scientists with managerial responsibility

LeadNet sees itself as a network run by and for early career Max Planck scientists in managerial positions. The network offers a forum for general scientific and organisational questions and is intended to promote cooperation between research groups. Once a year, the members host a symposium which, among other things, delivers information on career development and the science system.

If you are leading a research group, team or project, you can join the network.

[www.leadnet.mpg.de](http://www.leadnet.mpg.de)



More info on  
**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Minerva FemmeNet 33,  
Elisabeth-Schiemann-Kolleg 33

p. 33

Leaving Max Planck – Staying connected!  
Play your part in building a global,  
transdisciplinary network  
where there's room both for professional  
and private topics – in  
whatever part of the world.

→ A NETWORK FOR EVERYONE

### Max Planck Alumni Association

Around 10,000 people currently work in the scientific field in the Max Planck Society. In addition, every year, researchers from all over the world come to our Institutes for temporary residencies. All those who worked in the Max Planck Society for more than six months – including those still active – are invited to join the international Max Planck Alumni Association (MPAA). Its aim is to provide a global network for Max Planck alumni.

The MPAA acts as the umbrella organisation and aims to motivate its members to organise themselves into communities – whether by Max Planck Institute, town or region or by special interest. In particular, members also commit to establishing a dialogue with Max Planck scientists, e.g., as part of the Max Planck Symposium for Alumni and Early Career Researchers.

#### Mentoring

The Max Planck Alumni Association is currently developing a mentoring programme for young talented scientists up to the postdoc phase who wish to start their own business or embark on a different, non-academic career.

[www.mpg-alumni.de](http://www.mpg-alumni.de)



# Career and opportunities



## Offers for female scientists

We reserve special offers for female scientists working as doctoral students, postdocs or Group Leaders at Max Planck Institutes. For example, we want to help clear away the obstacles preventing women from pursuing a career path in science.

For female postdocs

### FUNDING PROGRAMMES

#### Minerva Fast Track Programme

With the Minerva Fast Track Programme, we offer excellent early career female scientists a long-term, predictable career in one location and at the highest level.

Are you taking your doctorate in the field of chemistry, physics and technology or the human sciences? Then the Minerva Fast Track Programme may be your next option. The condition is that a Scientific Member of the Max Planck Society puts your name forward and offers to act as your mentor in case you are selected. Your doctorate should be completed by the time of your application, but should not date back more than two years.

##### Phase I: Minerva Fast Track Fellow

Every year, two young female scientists will receive a TVöD post (E 13/14) as well as material resources and staff for a maximum of three years. During this period, they should qualify for leading a research group.

##### Phase II: Max Planck Research Group

During the course of the second year of Phase I, Minerva Fast Track Fellows can apply for an open-topic Max Planck Research Group within the selection procedure (see p. 25). They will be given special consideration in the preliminary selection.

#### Lise Meitner Excellence Program

With this programme, the Max Planck Society aims to recruit outstandingly qualified early career female scientists and offer them long-term prospects (see p. 26).

### MENTORING NETWORK I

#### Minerva-FemmeNet

Women encounter greater resistance on their career paths than men. Among other factors, they have less access to informal networks which facilitate entry to a profession or career. This is the reason for Minerva-FemmeNet. The coordinator of Minerva-FemmeNet arranges mentors for young female Max Planck scientists, regardless of their career level. There are currently 370 volunteer mentors from research and science supporting and advising over 500 young female scientists in all questions relating to their career planning.

In cooperation with other mentoring networks, Minerva-FemmeNet also offers training in soft skills. In several towns, the scientists also have regular round-table meetings, combined with introductory presentations relevant to their profession.

[www.minerva-femmenet.mpg.de](http://www.minerva-femmenet.mpg.de)

*I had my first child while I was studying and my second shortly afterwards, but I was always able to work in science. I think I can recognise the “traps” I fell into quickly enough to stop others making the same mistakes.*

Minerva-FemmeNet mentor

### MENTORING NETWORK II

#### Elisabeth Schiemann Kolleg

Within the Elisabeth Schiemann Kolleg scientific members of the Max Planck Society foster the careers of excellent female scientists after their postdoc phase, helping them to succeed on their way to an appointment as a tenured professor or as a director of a research institution. The main elements to the support offered by the Kolleg comprise mentoring, network-building, managerial coaching, and regular plenary meetings at which academic subjects and career questions are discussed.

Members of the Kolleg work at different universities and research facilities at home and abroad, and in most cases they have already completed their postdoc phase. They are researching in the fields of chemistry, physics, mathematics, computer science or another technical discipline.

You have to be nominated to join. Any professor or Director of a research facility is eligible to nominate. Membership ends after five years at the latest – or earlier as soon as you receive a permanent post.

For female doctoral students postdocs Group Leaders

For female postdocs Group Leaders

For female  
postdocs

→ SEMINARS/COACHING

## Sign Up! Career building

Together with "EAF Berlin. Diversity in Leadership", we have developed a training and networking programme for female postdocs intended to strengthen women and prepare them for managerial assignments in modern academic life. If you wish to take part, you will need a recommendation from your Institute's management. Every year, up to 18 female participants are selected across the country.

### Managerial skills and more

The programme consists of three seminar modules, each taking several days and spread over a period of eight months. Examples of the subjects dealt with include career paths in the European academic arena, success strategies, funding opportunities for research projects, networking, presentation, and managerial skills.

For female  
doctoral students  
postdocs

→ BUYING TIME WITH MONEY

## Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard Foundation

### For young female scientists with children

To enable more women to take part in cutting-edge research in Germany, the Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard Foundation supports young female scientists with children. The initiative launched by the Nobel Prize winner and Emeritus Max Planck Director is based on the conviction that the main factor making an academic career difficult for women is the double burden of work and family life.

The Foundation supports female doctoral students and postdocs of all nationalities who are conducting research at German universities and research institutions in the experimental sciences and medicine. Female postdocs who obtained their doctorate at a Germany university and continue their research abroad can also apply.

As a scholarship holder, you will receive 400 euros a month for one year. This will help you employ a household help or pay the babysitter or for extra childcare when you are away at a conference. It is presupposed that whole-day care for the child or children is guaranteed and paid for.

[www.cnv-stiftung.de](http://www.cnv-stiftung.de)

Max Planck uses  
various tools to  
support female  
scientists in their  
career decisions.

→ INTERNET PORTAL

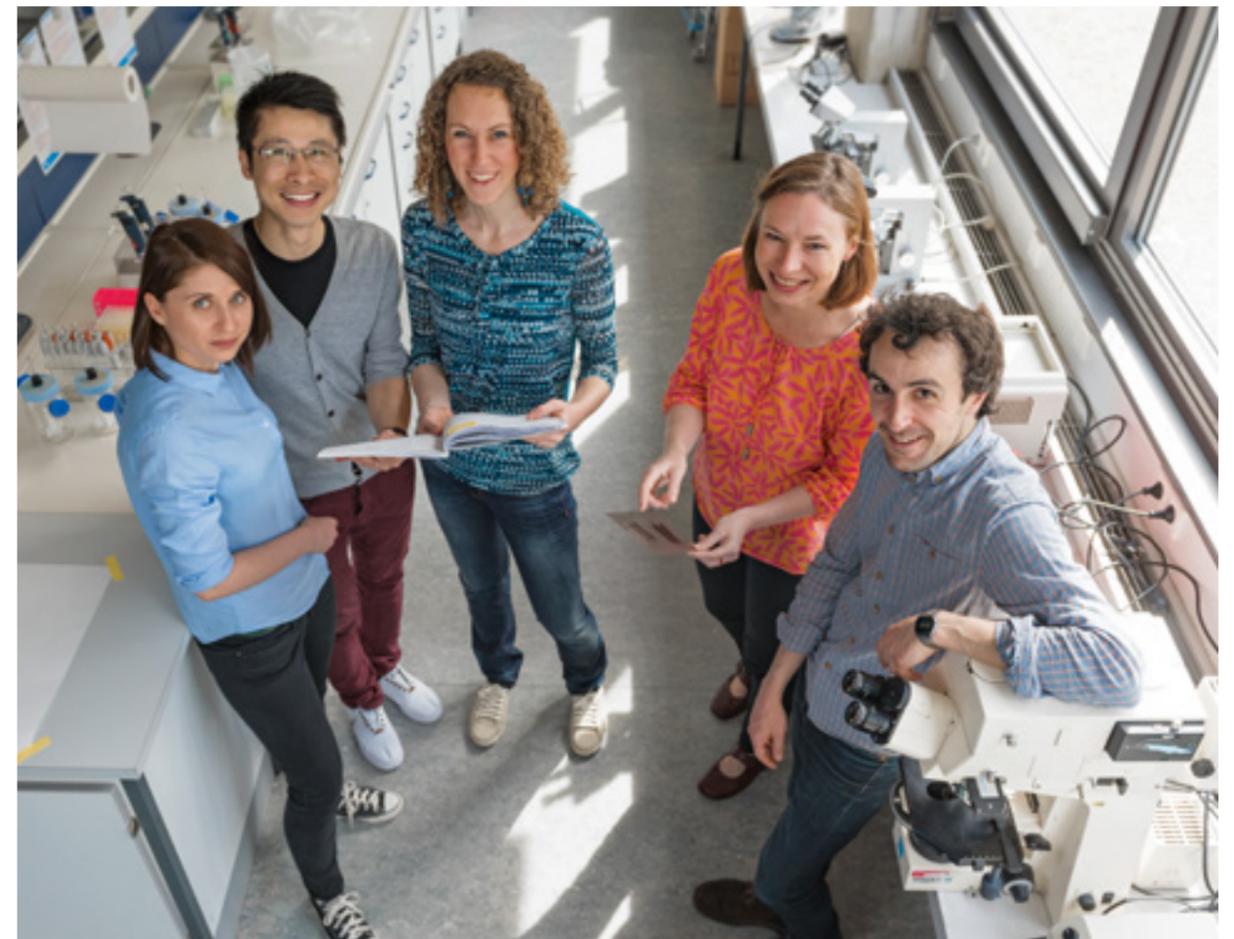
## AcademiaNet

The Max Planck Society is a partner organisation of AcademiaNet. The internet portal set up in 2010 contains a database with 2,500 profiles of top-class female scientists from all disciplines – mostly from German-speaking and European countries but also beyond. The platform is intended to help identify suitable female scientists, e.g., for academic governing bodies or managerial positions, and search for female speakers for conferences or female experts for consultations.

By contrast with other databases for female scientists, you have to be nominated for AcademiaNet by a scientific partner on the basis of defined selection criteria. If you are interested, please approach the Director at your Institute.

[www.academia-net.org](http://www.academia-net.org)

For female  
postdocs



At our Institutes, we promote equal opportunity careers in science.

# Career and family life



In the past **12 years**, the number of collaboration agreements with kindergartens has risen rapidly.



## Everything in balance

### Children and career, family and research

A career in science requires full commitment as do children or relatives in need of long-term care. Only if both spheres, i.e. family life and career, can be reconciled, will young parents or scientists with family responsibilities have the chance to remain in science and make progress.

This is exactly where our interests lie. We want to smooth the path for outstandingly talented individuals with families. The Max Planck Society operates a family-conscious human resources policy. Its main aim is to ensure that if a child is unable to go to kindergarten due to illness, the childminder is absent or older family members need to be looked after, Max Planck employees are able to respond flexibly. The Max Planck Society is certified in this regard by the charitable organisation beruf-undfamilie. We regularly have ourselves audited and always undertake anew to review certain aspects and create further offers of support. The subjects of the reconciliation of family life and career on the one hand, and career advancement on the other, are closely linked. We also have our internal Career Steps Networks through which we liaise closely at a local level with scientists directly affected.

### ALWAYS SAFE AND SOUND

### Childcare

In spite of their legal entitlement to a place in a day nursery, the number of people looking for a place near to their scientific work, is growing. We want to continue to provide support here. There are now a good 85 collaboration agreements with external bodies securing almost 650 places for children with operators of daycare nurseries at around 61 Max Planck Institutes.

*Biokids, Klopferspitzchen, Zappelphilipp, Mäxle, Topolino, Die Hippos, Planckton, Kosmos Kids*

Since 2015, the Max Planck Society has been able to “purchase” such places, also with childminders. This alternative is especially attractive for children up to the age of one year. The need for childcare places becomes evident early on, particularly in scientific work which is strongly tailored to the individual, and lengthy, family-related interruptions can hold back a career. Public nurseries are frequently unable to meet the needs; the legal entitlement to a childcare place only applies from the age of one. Added to this is the fact that parents of very small children, in particular, wish to be physically very close to them. One option is to accommodate flexible childminder groups on Institute premises (e.g., in former guest apartments no longer used). An alternative increasingly in demand by the Institutes.

### Parent-child rooms and kids' rooms

Parent-child rooms are frequently installed at the Institutes – where the space is available. The Institutes can fall back on templates for rules of use and parent agreements. Since 2016, there has also been an option to set up a kids' room. Any such kids' room can be used on multiple occasions but not regularly by schoolchildren, e.g., to do their homework.

### Pilot project for providing childcare for very small children

The Max Planck Society supports young parents who take their doctorate or complete their postdoc phase at a Max Planck Institute with a subsidy towards the care of their children aged between 3 and 12 months. The parents choose the form of childcare themselves; the Max Planck Society assumes half of the costs up to an upper limit of 400 euros a month.

To enable them to apply for the subsidy, at least one of the parents must have a contract of employment with a Max Planck Institute. Both parents together must also provide evidence of a certain number of working hours per week.



**Please apply in good time.** The Max Planck Foundation will fund a fixed-term pilot project. The project funds are limited and will be distributed in this period in the order in which applications are received.

### Family-friendly working hours

Flexible work arrangements: Employees with family commitments including looking after relatives in need of long-term care will have the chance to work part-time or – where possible – to telework.

### Family allowances

Scholarship holders can obtain family allowances; female scientists with fixed-term employment contracts in accordance with the Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act can take advantage of a contract extension for periods in which they are not permitted to work as well as for periods in which they take parental leave.



### Melina Schuh

Director at the MPI for Biophysical Chemistry, Göttingen  
Family: three children

*Women's time budgets are affected by pregnancy and the need to organise childcare. At the same time, they are in high demand, particularly for committees and conferences, as women are scarce in all areas. This means that little time remains for their core scientific work in certain phases, and this puts them at a disadvantage.*

*There is a need to make further progress in Germany in the reconciliation of work and family life. Science, however, is so fast-paced that it does not make sense to take parental leave for a year. Otherwise you can no longer compete. The MPI responded to my needs, enabling my youngest daughter to be looked after.*

## → WHEN HELP IS NEEDED

**Family service**

You want to travel to a conference and need someone to look after your child? You need to know that your child is also being well looked after in the holidays? You need a care-giver on a permanent basis? We have a contract with the company pme-Familienservice which acts as an agent in providing persons to care for children of up to the age of 14 – regardless of whether they are babysitters, au-pairs or emergency helpers provided at short notice. Help is also offered in caring for relatives in need of care.

[www.familienservice.de](http://www.familienservice.de)

## → GUIDELINES

**Pregnancy and maternity protection**

What does pregnancy entail for the work of a scientist, especially if she is employed in a laboratory? The guidelines on “Maternity protection in the laboratory” define the way in which scientific work can be reconciled with pregnancy and family life. The Max Planck Society undertakes as far as possible to support female scientists during pregnancy and nursing in continuing their lab work and avoiding interruptions to it – provided the mandatory risk assessment concludes that this is possible. This is due to the fact that the special necessity to protect pregnant or nursing women enjoys top priority. But even in individual cases where it is necessary to prevent women from working, we endeavour to mitigate the effects through various compensation schemes. For example, spatial separation from danger areas or funding an additional lab technician are conceivable options.

Help – whether it’s a babysitter, au-pair, sudden emergency care or for relatives in need of care.

## → INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS/DUAL CAREER NETWORKS

**Getting started in Germany**

Over 80 per cent of Max Planck Institutes have International Officers. These guest relation managers support scientists from abroad when it comes to fighting their way through Germany’s bureaucratic jungle with respect to laws governing foreign nationals. They are trained in intercultural cooperation and they will help you to feel at home not only in Germany, but also at your particular Institute.

The question of the spouse’s/partner’s career opportunities and the social environment plays an increasingly important role. As more and more women are being appointed, the number of male partners whom we advise and support, is also rising. The Max Planck Society is represented in numerous cooperation networks in German university locations in order to provide support for appointments: in the Dual Career Office of TU München (26 partner organisations, ministries and companies), in networks in Stuttgart, Heidelberg, Göttingen, the metropolitan Rhein-Main region, and in the region of Berlin-Brandenburg. If required, there are also contacts with Dual Career offices at the universities in Freiburg, Cologne and Potsdam; cooperation agreements are planned in further towns.

*Many Max Planck Institutes employ International Officers who support scientists from abroad.*



Family life and career – we want our offers to ensure that this is possible in science, too.

*The Max Planck Society is one of the leading research institutions in the world.*

**84**  
Max Planck facilities

**6,500**  
scientists

**7,900**  
early career researchers

**17+1**  
17 male Nobel Prize winners and one female Nobel Prize winner

**5 + 18**  
As well as five Institutes abroad, the MPG operates a further 18 Max Planck Centers with research facilities abroad

**250**  
Corporate Supporting Members

**400**  
Personal Supporting Members

The **Max Planck Society** is one of the leading research institutions in the world. There are currently around 6,500 scientists as well as nearly 7,900 early career researchers conducting basic research in the natural sciences, life sciences and humanities at 84 Max Planck facilities.

The Institutes are of international stature and attract top-class researchers from all over the world. Max Planck Institutes involve themselves in research areas which are particularly innovative and require a special commitment in terms of funding or time. Their research spectrum is constantly growing. New Institutes or departments are set up and existing ones rededicated in order to find answers to seminal scientific questions. This process of constant renewal preserves the Max Planck Society's leeway to pick up quickly on new scientific developments.

It was set up in 1948 as the successor organisation to the Kaiser Wilhelm Society which had been in existence since 1911. Since then, 17 male Nobel Prize winners and one female Nobel Prize winner have been produced from its ranks. As well as five Institutes abroad, the MPG runs a further 17 Max Planck Centers with research facilities such as Princeton in the USA, Harvard University, Science Po in France, University College London / UK or the University of Tokyo in Japan. Funded in equal measure by the Federal and State Governments, the Max Planck Society enjoys a total annual budget of 1.8 billion euros.

*The Institutes are of international stature and attract top-class researchers from all over the world.*

The Max-Planck-Gesellschaft is not a state institution but a non-profit, registered association. Stable public funding from the Federal and State Governments through the Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation offers it secure framework conditions.

Supporting Members of the Max Planck Society have an important role to play: Their support helps to solidify its position in society. Acting as multipliers, Supporting Members open doors and their private donations facilitate research projects for which no public funds are available.

The Max Planck Foundation is an independent foundation in civil law. Since its inception in 2006, it has invested around 45 million euros in more than 30 of our projects, thereby funding innovative, ground-breaking, top-class research in the natural sciences and humanities. The Max Planck Foundation is providing half a million euros for a pilot project concerned with looking after infants.

You will find up-to-date information at any time under the Career section on our website [www.mpg.de/en](http://www.mpg.de/en)

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March 2018

We welcome applications from individuals of all genders.

