

Sofja Kovalevskaja Award

(Visit our [FAQs](#) for further information)

Guidelines for completing the application

Required/enclosed documents:

The applicant must submit/request:

- a) Completed application form
- b) Key publications (list, copies)
- c) Complete list of publications
- d) Expert reviews from three academics
- e) Research plan
- f) Financial plan
- g) Information on the financial plan
- h) Curriculum vitae
- i) Doctoral certificate
- j) German or English language certificate

The host institution must submit:

- k) Host's statement
- l) Hosting agreement
- m) Confirmation by administration

Notes on k), l) and m) cf. [Information for the host](#).

All documents must be submitted **in German or English**. Applications from candidates in the natural and engineering sciences and medicine should preferably be submitted in English.

Do not use any application folders, clear plastic folders or loose-leaf binders to secure your documents (one-sided / black and white – this does not apply to your publications) but please submit the following:

1. a **filing fastener** with documents a), the list re. b), c), e), f), g), h), i) and j) in the order given
2. another **filing fastener** with a copy of a), the list re. b) and c)
3. re. b): four **envelopes** each containing a copy of your key publications, including dissertation where applicable (CD-ROM)
4. re. d): Please ask expert reviewers to send their statements to the Foundation directly.

Please send the application package by post to:

**Alexander von Humboldt Foundation
Selection Department
Jean-Paul-Straße 12
53173 Bonn, Germany**

When sending the application package do not declare a value as this might lead to a demand for customs duties which have to be paid by the applicant.

Complete applications including supporting documents must reach the Humboldt Foundation by the submission deadline. This submission deadline is not an absolute deadline; however, in the event of a late or incomplete submission it may not be possible to process and assess the application in the time available.

on a) Application form

Please ensure that you complete this form **in its entirety**, and do not delete any pre-defined page breaks in the form.

Please pay special attention to the following points:

- **Point 6:**

The term "host" refers to the person who will act as the award winner's direct academic contact at the host research institution, e.g., the chair holder or head of department in whose team you would like to establish a working group.

It is not possible to apply with two hosts concurrently. Furthermore, the programme does not assume a change of host institution during the award winner's sponsorship period.

- **Point 7:**

Please provide a seamless overview of every stage of your career according to the example below:

von from	bis to	Position position	Institution, Ort institution, city	Land country	Abschlüsse/Bemerkungen degrees/remarks
12.2010	heute to date	Research assistant	Universiteit Gent	Belgium	Part time (50%) Family time (50%)
04.2010	11.2010	Parental leave	Lille	France	Date of birth: 01.05.2010
03.2009	03.2010	Postdoc	Université de Lille	France	70% research 30% administration
11.2007	04.2008	Doctoral student	Beijing University	China	Fellowship from the French government
01.2006	02.2009	Doctoral student	Université Pierre et Marie Curie, Paris	France	Doctorat in New German Literature
09.2005	12.2005	No position	non-academic, London	UK	Interim period prior to doctorate (temporary work)
09.2003	08.2005	Student	University of Bristol	UK	Master of Arts in German Studies
02.2002	08.2002	Exchange student	Universität Köln	Germany	Erasmus Scholarship
09.2000	08.2003	Student	University of Southampton	UK	Bachelor of Arts in German Studies

Please list all periods in which you have interrupted your academic career either partially or completely (e.g. due to parental leave, military service, severe illness). We will assess whether these periods can be taken into account to extend the time limit set by the programme for the period after completing a doctorate. In case of parental leave this time limit may be extended by a maximum of two years per child.

- **Point 8:**

Please list only the languages required to carry out your project and/or for your stay in Germany.

- **Point 10:**

Apart from your academic disciplines, please cite the relevant codes from the Humboldt Foundation's [research area index](#).

- **Point 11:**

The relevant date is that of completing the final academic part of the doctoral process (e.g. defence of thesis, doctoral viva). This date is usually stated on your doctoral certificate together with the date of issue. The key date for calculating the period following your doctorate is the submission deadline. The completion of your doctorate must be less than six years before this date.

- **Point 12:**

Your research stay in Germany will commence in the calendar year in which the award is granted. Agreement on this date must be reached with the host prior to application.

Sponsorship in the context of the Sofja Kovalevskaja Programme is scheduled to last five years. Projects lasting significantly less than five years – six months shorter or more – will have no chance of being approved.

Please state the award amount (incl. administrative flat-rate) for which you are applying (from document f).

- **Point 13:**

The key words on your research topic help to give a first orientation towards identifying suitable independent peer reviewers. Please take this into account when making your choice.

The requested summary of your research proposal will serve as brief information on your objectives, research question and approach for the selection committee and the independent reviewers.

The brief summary of your research project should be worded in a manner comprehensible to non-specialists. Please do not use abbreviations without explaining them.

- **Point 16:**

You are at no disadvantage whatsoever if you and your (marital) partner apply at the same time or if your (marital) partner is already receiving sponsorship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Each application will be assessed independently. It should, however, be made clear that the applications are linked so that any aspects relating to dual-career couples can be taken into account during the decision-making process.

- **Point 18 and 18a:**

These two points must be signed, otherwise we cannot process your application.

- **Point 20:**

These personal details are voluntary. If your application is approved, they help to expedite delivery of the award documents.

on b) Key publications (list, copies)

- Please name **five** key publications that best represent your previous outstanding research. The total number of pages for all five publications (excluding books) should not exceed **70**.
- Please draw up a list of selected key publications using [this model](#). We cannot accept lists that are structured differently.
- Please only cite works that have been published, are accepted for publication or submitted for publication. A possible exception is your (unpublished) dissertation. If this is the case, please enclose the original manuscript of your doctoral thesis on CD-ROM.
- Your application should contain **four copies of each of the key publications** you have chosen (bound copies/books). Other publications will not be accepted (exception: (book) reviews of your key publications).
- The documents you submit will not be returned to you, so please only send copies. Exception: books will be returned at the end of the selection process. However, we assume no liability for lost or damaged books submitted to us. Please consider whether rather than the entire books, photocopied excerpts might be sufficient to demonstrate your research results.

on c) Complete publication list

- Please draw up a complete list of publications in reverse chronological order using [this model](#). We cannot accept lists that are structured differently.
- In your list of publications you are not permitted to include works that have not yet been submitted for publication.
- If you include works that are not in German or English please cite the title in the original language as well as in German or English.
- For manuscripts of papers that have “gone to press” or been “accepted for publication”, please enclose copies of the publisher’s letter(s) of acceptance with the application form. Until the Selection Committee Meeting, you may submit any additional letters of acceptance if they refer to papers already cited in the list as "submitted for publication".
- In the case of papers that have been submitted for publication please include copies of the publisher’s acknowledgement(s) of receipt with the application form.
- Please indicate the number under which the respective work is found in your complete list of publications on the letters of acceptance and acknowledgements of receipt.
- The list of publications submitted to the Humboldt Foundation may not be amended during the selection procedure.

on d) Expert reviews from three academics

In addition to the host statement, a total of **three** expert reviews are required. Please note that any additional expert reviews submitted with your application will not be considered when assessing this application. Please forward our list of questions to the reviewers you have chosen and ask them to return their statements to the Humboldt Foundation directly. The [list of questions for expert reviews](#) is available online.

Your reviewers should hold leadership positions, come from different countries if possible, and comment on you as an individual and on your research proposal. We recommend approaching one or more of the following to provide expert reviews:

1. your doctoral supervisor, please identify him or her on the application form,
2. the senior academic at the institute at which you are currently working, if he or she is not your doctoral supervisor,
3. the senior academic at any host institute at which you have spent more than two months away from your own institute as a guest researcher in the last five years.

on e) Research plan

Length: no more than **25 pages**

You must draw up the research plan yourself and discuss it with your prospective host before submitting the application. This research plan serves to demonstrate that you are capable of independently planning an innovative and extensive research project, aware of both the academic and organisational challenges it entails, and able to develop appropriate strategies to meet these challenges.

Please provide detailed information on your proposed project:

1. Elucidate the current state of research.
2. Describe any preparatory work you have carried out.

3. Present the proposed work and the methods you have chosen. The research work must be conducted in its entirety and for the full duration of the project at the host institution in Germany (exceptions: necessary excursions, working visits to partner institutions etc.). In the context of the Sofja Kovalevskaja Programme, it is not usually possible for an award winner to be employed concurrently by a research institution abroad. The project should be carried out by a junior research group headed by the award winner.
4. Give a detailed explanation of your reasons for choosing the host institution. Please take time to elucidate any collaboration planned at the host institution itself as well as any human or material resources the institution will provide in its own interest.
5. Provide information on collaborations planned with other German or international partners.
6. Indicate the significance of the research proposal for your future academic career.
7. Draw up a timetable indicating milestones to be reached in the proposed sponsorship period. Sponsorship in the context of the Sofja Kovalevskaja Programme is scheduled to last five years. Projects lasting significantly less than five years – six months shorter or more – will have no chance of being approved.
8. Enclose a bibliography for your research plan.

on f) Financial plan

The financial plan contains comprehensive details of projected expenditure during the sponsorship period. It will be assessed for its appropriateness and plausibility in the specialist review. We urgently recommend that you coordinate all aspects of your financial plan with the host institute you have chosen.

“[Financial plan](#)” form:

Please do not attempt to change the format of the “Financial plan” form as certain sections are self-generating.

- **Table 1 – Personnel costs:**

If possible, please use the standard rates of pay stated on the form to calculate personnel planning. Please ask your host institution whether the same rates apply there (N.B.: the rates of pay for research group staff correspond to those of the DFG). Please also discuss the possibilities of the host institution for providing the sum intended to cover your living costs; see also our [FAQ](#). If different rates apply, please use the column 'Rates of pay at host institution'. Table 1 will then automatically access these rates of pay.

- **Table 2 – Travel expenses:**

You should base calculations for any type of journey on a lump-sum per journey and participant. Your host will advise you on realistic rates.

- **Table 3 – Costs for equipment:**

Please list any equipment that has to be acquired for your research work. The equipment will become the property of the host institution immediately upon purchase but will be put at your disposal for the duration of sponsorship.

- **Table 4 – Costs for consumables:**

This is where you can declare costs for running your research project, such as costs of experiments (e.g. chemicals, necessary special software incl. licences, specialist literature). If necessary, you may state total costs only.

- **Table 5 – Miscellaneous expenses:**

Please list expenses which are related to your research but do not easily fit into the other categories (e.g. publishing / costs of patents, fees, workshop at the host institute). If necessary, you may state total costs only.

- **Table 6 – Administrative flat-rate:**

The host institution will receive 15% from the award amount as an administrative flat-rate. This sum is generated automatically on the “Financial plan” form. It is not necessary to provide any explanations. You can find more detailed information on the administrative flat-rate in the [Information for the host](#), whom we shall ask to submit a statement on this point.

Visit the [FAQs](#) where you will find numerous questions about the financial plan.

[Model financial plan](#)

on g) Information on the financial plan

Length: up to one page

Please elucidate the necessity and appropriateness of all the expenditure stated in the financial plan even if you have already provided information on individual items of expenditure elsewhere. It is essential to address the following issues:

1. Personnel costs: How many staff do you need to carry out which tasks? If you deviate from the preset standard rates (see financial plan), please state your reasons.
2. Travel expenses: How often and to what purpose are you intending to organise reciprocal visits with your collaborative partners? Which members of staff will be involved? Which conferences or conference series are particularly important?
3. Costs for equipment: Explain the type and quantity of equipment required.
4. Costs for consumables and miscellaneous research costs.
5. Please state any **third-party funding** (e.g. German Research Foundation, European Union or industry) that has been approved or applied for in connection with the project. Please add a list.

on h) Curriculum vitae

The curriculum vitae should not exceed two pages in length. It may contain additional information on the stages described in the form.

on i) Doctoral certificate

Please submit **one copy** of your doctoral certificate or the certificate for the highest academic degree obtained so far. If the certificate is not in German, English, French, Latin, Spanish or Italian, a certified translation must be enclosed.

Candidates who have already completed their doctorates but have not yet received an official doctoral certificate may present a provisional certificate issued by their doctoral supervisor or their own university. As soon as you are formally awarded your doctorate, please also send us a copy of the doctoral certificate.

on j) Language certificate

Please submit a German or English language certificate, endorsed by a university lecturer in this language or by a language institute. You may use the Humboldt Foundation’s “German and English language certificate” form.

Natural sciences and engineering: Good knowledge of German or English is sufficient.

Humanities and social sciences: You should have knowledge of German if it is necessary to carry out the project successfully. In this case, a German language certificate confirming proficiency must be submitted. Otherwise, a good knowledge of English is sufficient.

Medicine: If the research project involves work with patients a German language certificate confirming proficiency must be submitted. Otherwise, a good knowledge of English is sufficient.

You do **not** need to submit a language certificate if

- English or German is your mother tongue or
- you have spent several years working in a scientific capacity in an English- or German-speaking country.

as of April 2015