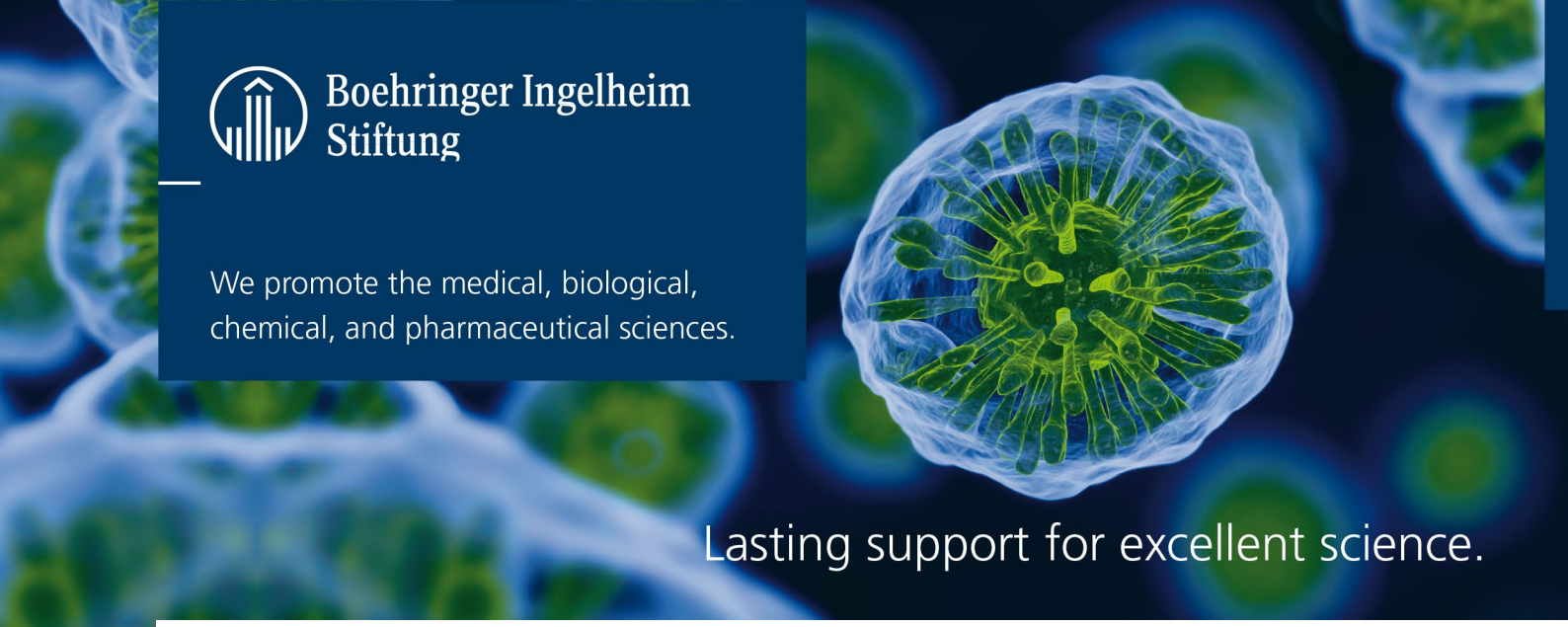


Cheiron Fellows Programme

Programme objectives

The Cheiron Fellows programme is aimed at leading scientists in their respective fields who wish to continue their research beyond the statutory retirement age and to pass on their expertise and experience to the next generation of researchers. The programme supports senior professorships in fundamental research in the biological, chemical, and medical sciences. It is intended for individuals who can demonstrate outstanding scientific achievements and who have proven exceptional commitment to supporting early-career researchers. The Cheiron Fellows scheme provides funding for a highly original research programme, competitive by international standards, to be conducted at an academic institution of the recipient's choice in Germany.

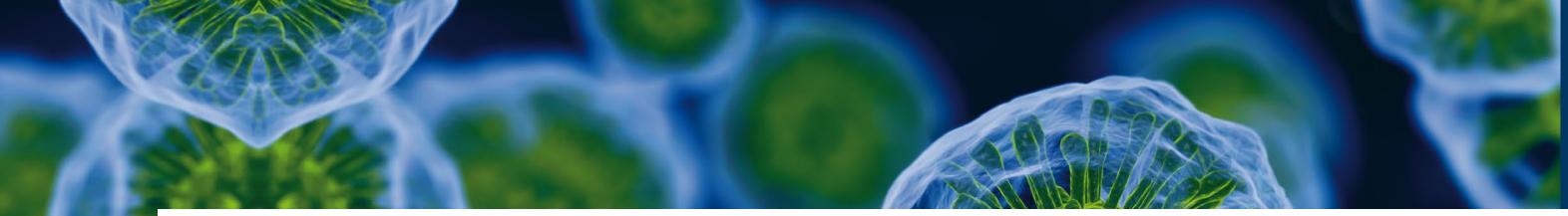
Extent of funding

You can apply for up to 2,500,000 EUR of research funding for a maximum duration of 5 years, plus up to 500,000 EUR for overhead costs. Funding will initially be granted for 3 years. A second phase of an additional 2 years of funding will be granted contingent on a positive evaluation in year 3. The research funding can be used towards scientific personnel, project-related consumables and equipment, travel and publications. It can also be used towards supporting the next generation of scientists outside of the recipient's own laboratory. If the senior professorship is to be installed at a new host institution, some of the funding may be used as a contribution to the costs incurred by the move of the laboratory.

Conditions for applying

If you wish to apply, the following criteria must be met:

- Your research focuses on fundamental questions in the biological, medical, and chemical sciences. The foundation accepts only proposals that focus on research of broader relevance to the biosciences, for instance, studies in basic biology, biophysics, computational biology, medicine, biochemistry, and chemical biology. The foundation particularly encourages applications with the potential to yield novel insights into fundamental processes. It does not support research in classical zoology or botany, or pure organic or inorganic chemistry, or clinical studies.
- You are an internationally recognized top-level researcher who has made outstanding contributions to their field and are acknowledged by the global scientific community.
- You propose an original and creative research programme that will significantly advance and shape the direction of your field of research.



- You have a proven track record in developing the next generation of scientific leaders in your field, originating from your own and from outside of your own laboratory.
- You will reach the statutory retirement age within the next two years. However, Cheiron Fellows funding can only begin after the date of your statutory retirement age.
- You wish to install a senior professorship at a university or academic research institution in Germany.
- Your chosen host organization supports your application and guarantees access to laboratory and office space, infrastructure, as well as administrative support for your research team for the duration of the proposed Cheiron Fellows funding period.
- You must not receive or expect to receive funding for the proposed research programme by any other organization.
- Your research group does not receive funding from any additional sources that fulfil a similar purpose or that are equivalent to or exceed the scope of the Cheiron Fellows programme. If you are unsure about this criterion or have any questions, we strongly recommend contacting the foundation before preparing a proposal, as this may affect your eligibility to apply.

What cannot be funded by the Cheiron Fellows programme?

- Researchers located at privately funded research institutions cannot be funded.

Selection procedure

The selection procedure is a multi-step process:

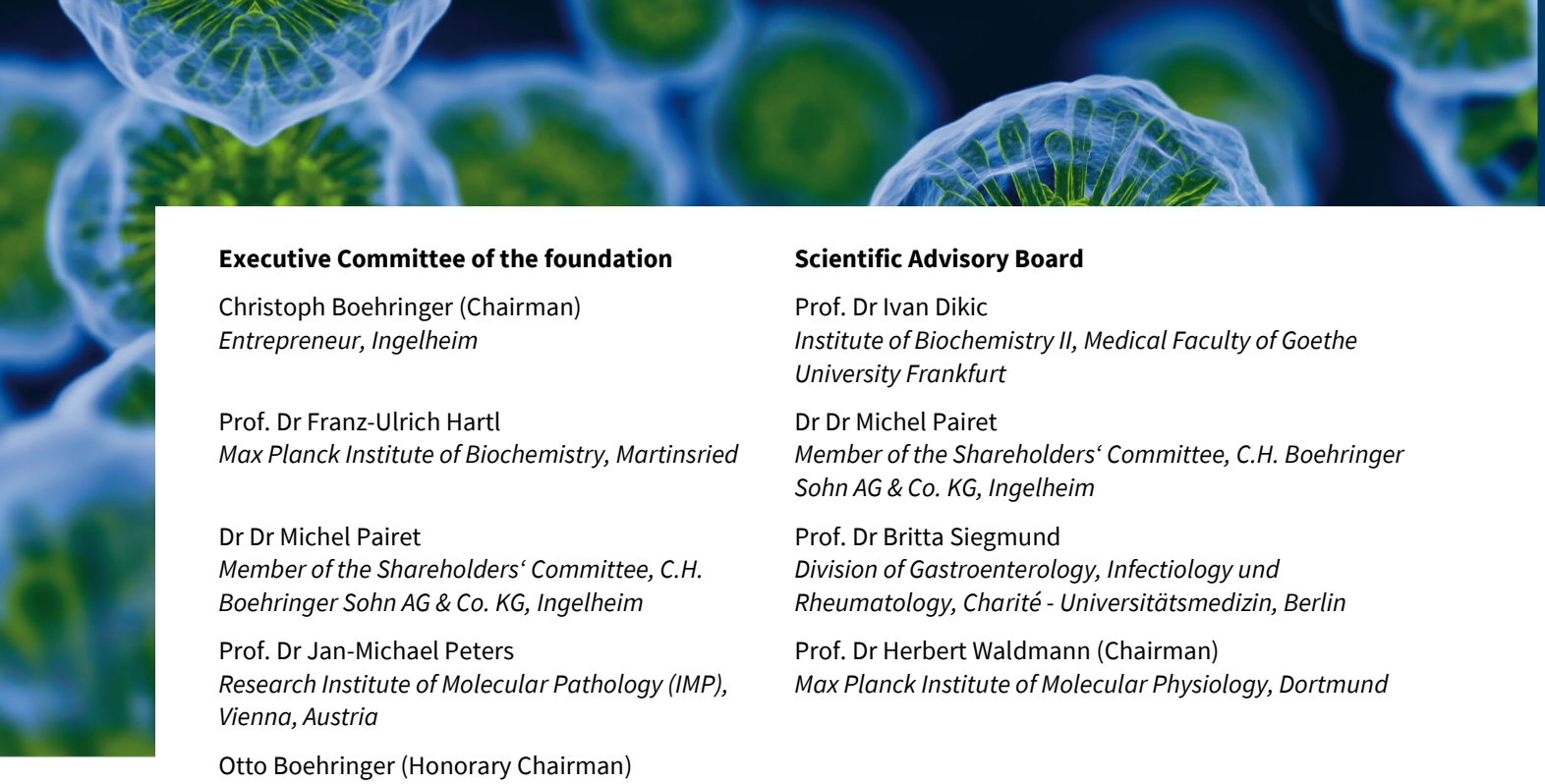
1. Letter of Intent: The foundation's office will check all applications for formal eligibility and, in agreement with the foundation's Scientific Advisory Board, select applications to be invited for submission of a full proposal. This step will take approx. 2 months. The deadline for submission of a full proposal will be 1 month after the date of invitation.
2. Full proposal: The decision to grant funds is made by the Executive Committee of the Boehringer Ingelheim Stiftung based on the recommendations made by the foundation's Scientific Advisory Board and external peer reviews. You may recommend potential reviewers in your cover letter. Additionally, you may name (giving reasons) any scientists to whom your proposal should not be presented for evaluation. This step will take 3-4 months.

Questions about the programme?

Please contact Dr Sabine Loewer
tel: +49 (0) 6131 27 508-12, email: funding@bistiftung.de

The Boehringer Ingelheim Stiftung

The Boehringer Ingelheim Stiftung is an independent, non-profit foundation that is committed to promoting the medical, biological, chemical, and pharmaceutical sciences. It was established in 1977 by Hubertus Liebrecht (1931–1991), a member of the shareholder family of the Boehringer Ingelheim company. Through its funding programmes, the foundation enables outstanding scientists to pursue original and potentially high-risk ideas, providing them with the freedom and resources to explore new avenues of research. It also endows the international Heinrich Wieland Prize, as well as awards for up-and-coming scientists in Germany. Additionally, it funds institutional projects, such as the AITHYRA Institute in Vienna and a new research department (BioAI) at the Center for Systems Biology in Dresden. Both combine AI and biomedicine. Other supported institutions include the Institute of Molecular Biology (IMB) in Mainz and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg, both in Germany.



Executive Committee of the foundation

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Entrepreneur, Ingelheim

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Max Planck Institute of Biochemistry, Martinsried

Dr Dr Michel Pairet
Member of the Shareholders‘ Committee, C.H. Boehringer Sohn AG & Co. KG, Ingelheim

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Research Institute of Molecular Pathology (IMP), Vienna, Austria

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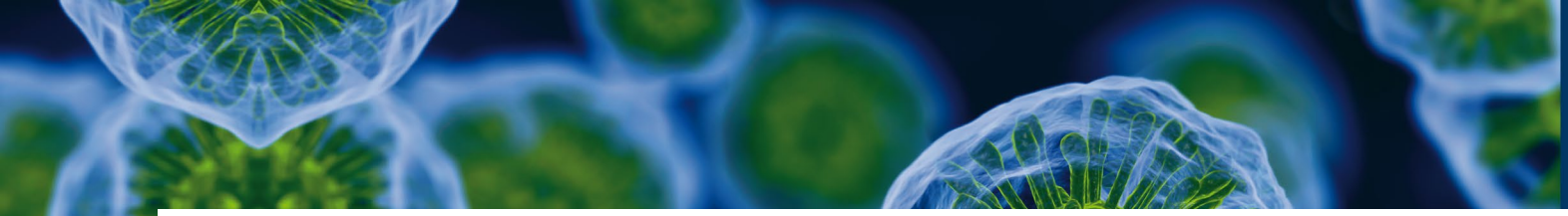


Cheiron Fellows application guidelines

Applications for funding by the Cheiron Fellows programme can be submitted via the foundation's online application tool accessible via this link. In the first step, you can only access **Section A: Letter of Intent** to submit a letter of intent. **Section B: Full Proposal** will only become accessible once you have been invited to submit a full proposal.

A: Letter of Intent

A.1: Information to be entered in the online application form

1. General information

1.1. Personal details

- Surname, first name, academic title
- Current position
- Duration of current contract
- Date of statutory retirement
- Date of birth
- Nationality
- Degrees

1.2. Current place of work *(may or may not be identical with the host organization of this application)*

- Institution and department/faculty (full name)
- Work address
- Phone number for contact
- Email address for contact
- Alternative email address for contact

1.3. Funding of your research group

State how your research group is currently being funded. List the
(1) resources/funding bodies and
(2) funding amounts (including personnel and non-personnel resources) that your lab receives from your university/institution or any third party, as well as
(3) their respective durations.

2. Information about the project

2.1. Title of project *(up to 100 characters)*

2.2. Subject and area of research

- Subject (e.g., molecular biology, immunology)
- Area of research (e.g., DNA repair)

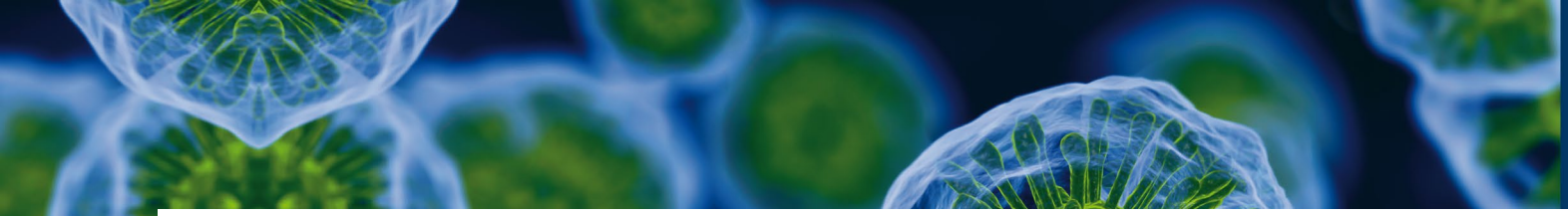
2.3. Proposed beginning and duration of funding

2.4. Proposed host organization

At which host organization do you wish to install your senior professorship?

2.5. Summary *(up to 2,000 characters)*

Please focus on the following 2 relevant areas in your summary:



(1) Summarise the hypotheses and the main objectives of your proposed project in generally accessible language, with particular attention to its ground-breaking nature.
(2) Describe how you will use your expertise and experience to contribute to the development of junior scientists and emerging leaders. How will you support the careers of scientists beyond those working in your own laboratory?

2.6. Total funds requested

A.2: Required PDF documents to be uploaded

Please upload separate PDF files (each no larger than 5 MB) for (1) your narrative CV and (2) the extended synopsis of your proposal:

1. ***Narrative CV containing the following sections***

   1.1. Personal details
   Full name, affiliation, and current position

   1.2. Scientific contributions *(up to 1,000 characters)*
   Describe your leadership role in your field of research; how has your work influenced the directions of your field, what is the long-term impact of your work on your field of research and beyond?
   List up to 5 key outputs of your work (not counting towards the character limit).

   1.3. Contributions to the development of individuals *(up to 1,000 characters)*
   Describe how you have contributed to the training and development of the next generation of leaders in your field (and beyond, if applicable). How have you engaged in mentoring individuals in your own laboratory and beyond, and how has this influenced their career track? Has your laboratory brought forward current leaders in your field?

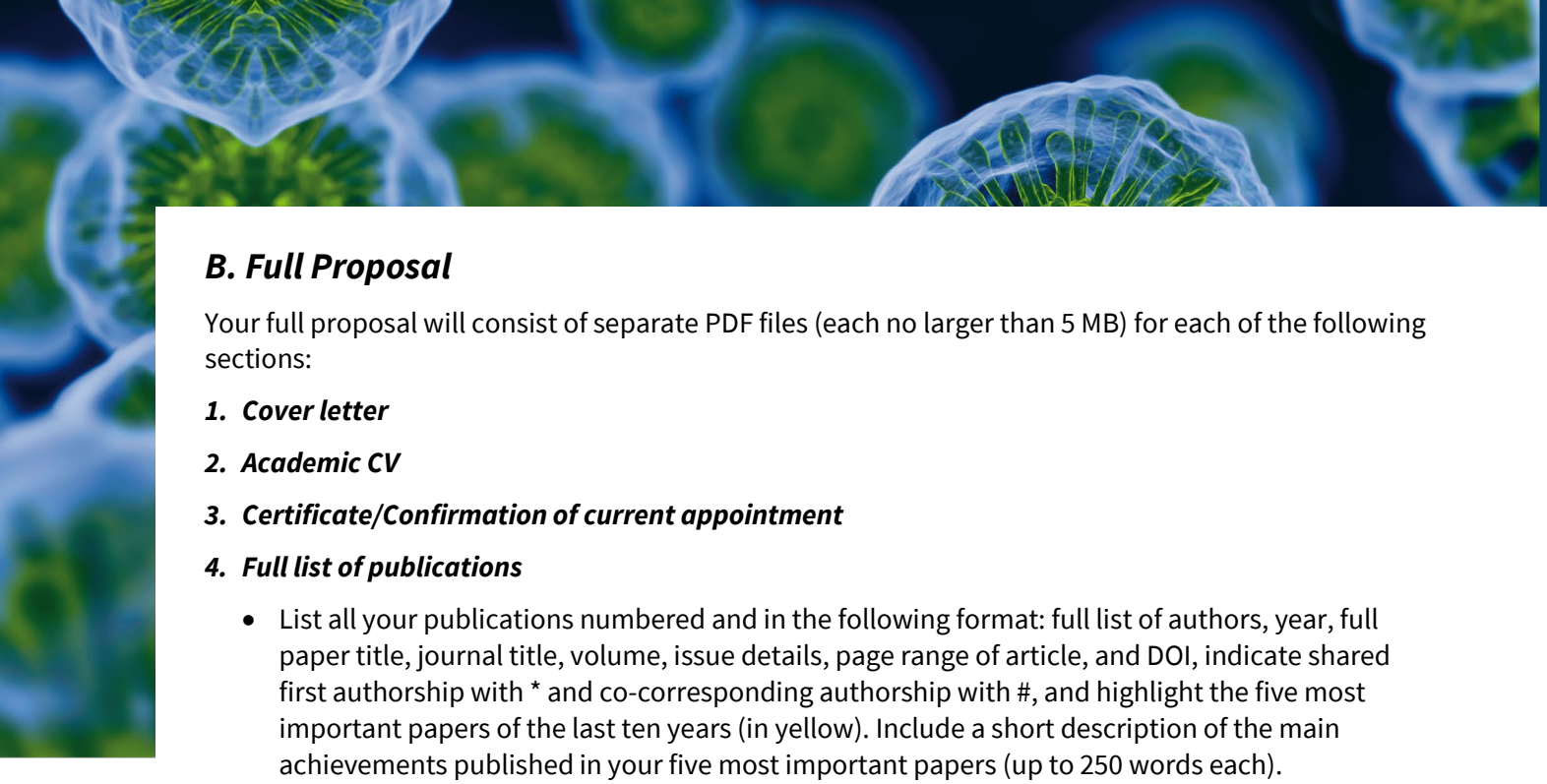
   1.4. Contributions to the research community, to society *(up to 1,000 characters)*
   Describe any activities (e. g. editorial, advisory, organizational) through which you have engaged in services to the scientific community or to society.

2. ***Extended synopsis of your proposal***
   Provide a concise presentation of your proposal (up to 12,000 characters and up to 2 figures), providing appropriate references. References do not count towards the character limit. Include the following sections:

   2.1. Proposed research programme
   Describe your research programme in the context of the state of the art of the field. Emphasize the ground-breaking nature of your proposed research.

   2.2. Mentoring junior scientists
   Describe how you plan to contribute to the professional development of junior scientists in your own research field and beyond. How will next-generation scientists outside of your own research group at your host institution or beyond profit from your expertise and experience?

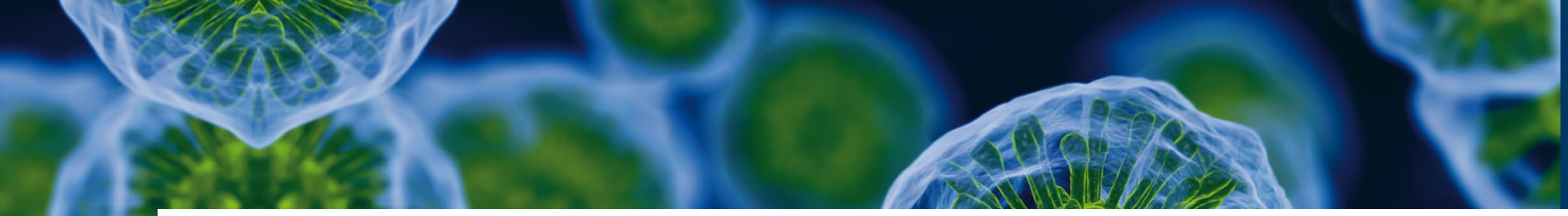
   2.3. Choice of host institution
   Explain your choice of host institution and how it supports your application in the Cheiron Fellows programme.



B. Full Proposal

Your full proposal will consist of separate PDF files (each no larger than 5 MB) for each of the following sections:

1. ***Cover letter***
2. ***Academic CV***
3. ***Certificate/Confirmation of current appointment***
4. ***Full list of publications***
   - List all your publications numbered and in the following format: full list of authors, year, full paper title, journal title, volume, issue details, page range of article, and DOI, indicate shared first authorship with * and co-corresponding authorship with #, and highlight the five most important papers of the last ten years (in yellow). Include a short description of the main achievements published in your five most important papers (up to 250 words each).
   - Use separate sections for
     i. original articles (published or accepted/in press)
     ii. reviews
     iii. manuscripts submitted or in revision (do not include manuscripts in preparation)
5. ***Five most important publications***
   - Submit each paper as a separate PDF file, each no larger than 5 MB, and in the same order as they appear in the full list of publications.
6. ***Detailed concept for the senior professorship*** *(detailed guidelines see Section C below)*
7. ***Support letter by the host organization***
   Binding commitment of the host organization to support the application. The host organization commits (i) to install a senior professorship and (ii) to provide access for the senior professorship to appropriate laboratory and office space, infrastructure and administrative support for the duration of the Cheiron Fellows funding period. The host institution further confirms that the instalment of the senior professorship does not impair or delay any other regular professorial appointments.
8. ***Other documents*** (e.g., quotes of items of equipment exceeding 10,000 EUR)



C: Guidelines – detailed concept for the senior professorship

The proposal should consist of no more than 20 pages and should be comprehensible without reading the cited or appended literature. The proposal should be uploaded as a PDF file. Please adhere to the following order to facilitate the review process.

1. Information about the project

1.1. Title of project

1.2. Subject and area of research

- Subject (e.g., molecular biology, immunology)
- Area of research (e.g., DNA repair)

1.3. Proposed beginning and duration of funding

1.4. Summary *(up to 2,000 characters)*
Please summarise the hypotheses and the main objectives of your proposed research programme in generally accessible language, with particular attention to its ground-breaking nature. Describe how you will use your expertise and experience to contribute to the development of individual future leaders in your field.

1.5. State of research
Please describe the current state of knowledge concisely and exclusively in relation to your own research, mentioning the most significant work by other scientists. Make clear how your own work fits into this context, and to which of the open questions in the field you are making a new contribution, and what importance, in your view, it will have in the field.

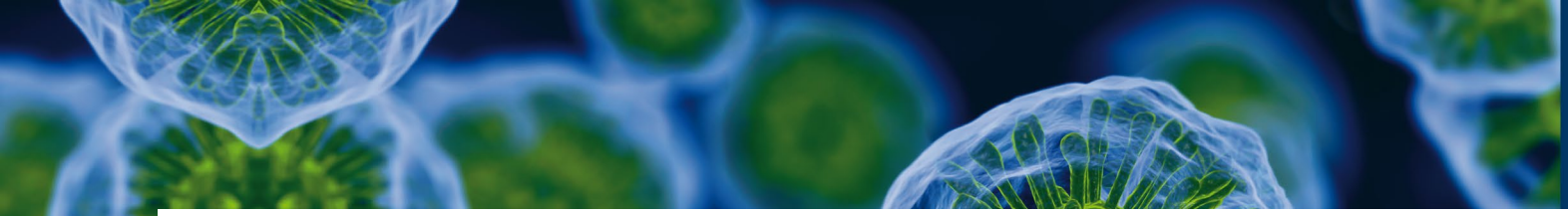
1.6. Your own preliminary studies
Please describe your preliminary work and results obtained so far, citing the relevant literature. If you intend to develop a new research programme deviating from your previous work, extensive preliminary results directly linked to the proposed research programme may not exist. In this case, describe the major results of your previous work, including unpublished results.

1.7. Overall objective and specific aims
A brief description of your proposed research programme for 3 + 2 years, as well as its overarching goal and specific aims. State which aspects of your proposal are especially innovative and how they may impact on your field of research (and beyond, if applicable).

1.8. Research design and methods
Detailed research plan for 3 + 2 years including milestones, risks, and mitigation strategies.

1.9. Cooperation agreements
Please list the scientists (other than those named in sections 2.2.1 and 4.1.) with whom you are currently cooperating or coordinating your work, or have agreed to do so in the future, as well as the projects or project components concerned in each case.

1.10. Concept for mentoring future leaders
Describe a comprehensive plan for how you will pass on your expertise and experience to individuals who have the potential to become the next generation of leaders in their field of research. How do you envisage providing active and effective mentoring?



2. *Funds requested*

2.1. Total funds requested

Please state the total amount of the funds requested for 3 + 2 years (research funding and up to 20 percent of overhead costs).

2.2. Breakdown of costs

Provide a detailed table with the requested budget for 3 + 2 years, clearly separating between different cost categories (i.e. personnel, consumables, etc.).

2.2.1. Personnel expenses

Please specify:

- The number and types of positions (e.g., 1 Postdoc position, 100 % TVöD E13)
- The proposed periods of employment
- The requested amount of funding per position

Please describe briefly which parts of the proposed research programme will be conducted by which personnel and provide justification of any substantial deviation from the standard annual rates granted by public funding organizations (such as DFG).

2.2.2. Consumables

State the amount of funding you expect to need annually for consumables and provide justification of any substantial deviations from the standard rates granted by public funding organizations (such as DFG).

2.2.3. Other resources

Specify the purpose and amount of any additional funds that you need (e.g. for mentoring; as a contribution to moving costs in case the senior professorship involves the transfer of your laboratory to a new academic institution; project-related equipment). If you are requesting funds exceeding 10,000 EUR for individual items of equipment, please provide written justification and recent price quotes.

3. *References*

Numbered and including full list of authors, year, full paper title, journal title, volume, issue details, page range of article, and DOI.

4. *Other information*

4.1. Composition of the research group

List all members of your research group (names, academic titles, official positions, and funding sources including fellowship holders) and highlight those who are to participate in the planned research programme (other than those named in section 2.2.1).

4.2. Conflicts of interest due to commercial activities

Please inform us of any conflicts of interest e.g., if you are the owner of a commercial enterprise or own a stake in one. In each case, explain how your research project relates to the commercial enterprise's activities.

4.3. Applications submitted to others

Please list any other bodies to which you have submitted a funding application for the present research programme or any part thereof, stating the amount of funding requested.