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Who can apply – PhD fellowships

Who can apply for a PhD fellowship

The Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds (BIF) awards PhD fellowships to European citizens working in Europe or overseas and to non-European citizens pursuing their PhD projects in Europe.

The PhD projects must be experimental, in the field of basic biomedical research, and aimed at elucidating basic biological phenomena of human life and acquiring new scientific knowledge.

For further requirements, see below.

Deadlines: February 1, June 1, and October 1 of each year

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At the deadline

- Your **first** university entrance qualification (secondary or high school leaving certificate, A-levels, or entrance/access test for first university studies after finishing school) must not have been completed more than **8 years, i.e. 96 months** ago.
- Natural scientists should have been awarded their last university degree before embarking on their PhD (BSc, diploma, MSc, or equivalent). If you have not yet finished your MSc studies and/or have not received your MSc degree certificate by the deadline, you can submit it up to four months after the deadline.
- Physicians, veterinary surgeons, and pharmacists should have passed their state examinations.

Candidates from the same laboratory

If two candidates from the same laboratory apply for a PhD fellowship at the same time, only one of them may receive a fellowship. We, therefore, recommend that they apply at different deadlines.

Timing of application

You should apply when you are about to start, or have just started, your PhD project, no preliminary results are expected. If you have begun your project **more than six months** prior to the deadline, you are no longer eligible to apply.

Definition of the start of a PhD project

- If you continue to work in your MSc/BSc thesis research group: the date at which you obtained your highest degree (e.g. BSc, MSc, diploma, DEA, laurea) before embarking on your PhD.
- If you change the research group: the month of arrival at the laboratory in which you pursue your PhD project, irrespective of the project you started to work on.
- If your PhD programme requires initial lab rotations and your last lab rotation is in your PhD lab: the end of your lab rotation period.

In other cases, e.g. when participating in MSc/PhD programmes or graduate schools without an official final examination prior to the PhD project, please contact us.

What we do and do not fund

We do not fund

- Applied research, such as biotechnological and pharmaceutical development (e.g. development of assays for diagnostic purposes or drug screening, optimization or screening of substances for therapeutic use, development of drug delivery systems or vaccines)
- Studies on the course of diseases or the treatment of symptoms or clinical studies
- Botanical and prokaryotic investigations, unless they are of general biological importance
- Education. As we can only support research, fellowships may not be used during the course and rotation phase of PhD programmes, but only for the duration of the PhD project.

For further examples, please see What we fund and do not fund.

We fund

We support only experimental projects in basic biomedical research, including *in silico* projects.

For example:

- Analysis of RNA polymerase I structure and transcription regulation
- The role of spontaneous activity in the development of neural circuits
- Intestinal symbionts induce distinct populations of regulatory T cells
- Heterochromatin protein 1 secures survival and transmission of malaria parasites
- Epigenetic reprogramming in the maternal germ line.

For further examples, please see What we fund and do not fund or browse the summaries of completed PhD projects in Futura, the BIF's international journal.

Funding from others

The Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds must be notified if an application is submitted to any other research-sponsoring institution. Should an applicant take up an award from another institution prior to the decision of the BIF, the application to the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds is considered withdrawn and the BIF must be notified immediately.

Exceptions are made for fellowships exclusively covering tuition fees.

Please refer to our PhD fellowship conditions.

Working contracts

The PhD fellowship is intended to cover your living expenses, so that you can fully concentrate on your PhD. Therefore, you may not receive a regular personal income from an employer while being funded by a BIF fellowship. However, one working contract of up to five hours a week yielding a marginal income may be acceptable.

Applicants wishing to work in countries where stipends underlie strict legal or tax regulations, such as Austria, Denmark, Norway, or Switzerland, please refer to our PhD fellowship conditions.

If you are not sure whether your project fits within the scope of what we support, you are welcome to contact us.

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