

PM 8.4.2. Career development guidelines for leaders of temporary Junior Research Groups

at

Research Center Borstel
Leibniz Lungcenter (RCB)

I. Background

Outstanding young scientists (basic and clinical researchers) are given the opportunity to convincingly demonstrate their qualifications for a limited time, usually 5 years

- to lead a junior research group independently,
- to train doctoral and master/bachelor students,
- to publish very well,
- to raise considerable third-party funds,
- to integrate their scientific activities into the research concept of the RCB,
- to contribute to the scientific mission of the RCB (chronic inflammatory diseases of the lung of infectious or non-infectious origin)

II. General conditions

The Junior Research Group (JRG) is assigned to one of the two program areas, but within the framework of the research conception/mission of the RCB it is given full independence in the selection of the research projects he/she is working on. These projects are agreed upon with the program directors on a collegial basis and set down in writing.

A JRG is established for five years and can be extended for a maximum of two years. It is set up after the Extended Board has identified the need for additional thematic expertise or methodology at the RCB; the setting up requires the approval of the Board of Directors. An external call for proposals is mandatory. The works council must be involved in the tender or filling of the position of the group leader (GL).

The RCB shall provide the JRG with laboratory space as well as basic financial and technical equipment and shall grant appropriate access to jointly used equipment and premises.

The JRG shall consist of at least the GL, a research assistant, a technical assistant and a doctoral candidate. The postdoctoral position can also be financed by third-party funds.

The GL is committed to integrate the research into the concept of the RCB and to contribute to its further development and international visibility. He/She is committed to actively participate in the Graduate School of the RCB (BBRS). The GL is expected to actively participate in new scientific initiatives and national/international alliances as well as in the organization of scientific events. The GL undertakes to follow the rules of good scientific practice according to the guidelines of the RCB and DFG and to observe the evaluation system of the Leibniz Association, the audits by the Scientific Advisory Board, the data storage in the PURE research information system and the system of performance-based allocation of funds.

III. Further training as a science manager

The GL is obligated to participate in a structured, modular advanced training curriculum for scientific managers, which lasts several days and comprises at least the following units:

- Strategic Science and Change Management
- Role understanding and scope of duties of management personnel
- Leadership and communication; media communication
- Employee leadership and conflict management
- Personnel and labor law / Personnel selection
- Strategic financial management
- Project Management

The costs for participation in the courses are covered by the RCB up to an amount of EUR 10,000. Participation is not obligatory if proof of a similarly comprehensive further training course is provided for scientific executives is provided.

IV. Mentoring

The GL has the duty to select at least one person from the circle of selected scientific leaders of the Center (including its scientific advisory board), the neighboring universities and Leibniz institutions in Kiel, Lübeck and Hamburg (list in the appendix) to act as a mentor and to provide individual advice on questions of daily work, support in personal and professional development and access to networks. The counseling interviews are to be documented and should take place at least twice a year. An annual short report by the mentor, which should present the progress of the GL, but also explain development needs, will be used together with the Scientific Advisory Board for the evaluation and development of target agreements for the GL.

V. Criteria for the evaluation of the junior research group for the extension of the term

The performance is evaluated regularly, at least every two years, by the Scientific Advisory Board of the RCB. During the evaluation, realistic and concrete target agreements for the next years are made, both in terms of scientific milestones and personal career ambitions of the GL. In the fourth year, a comprehensive assessment of the previous achievements is carried out by 2 members of the scientific advisory board and the Extended Board of the RCB. If the main criteria of the evaluation are met, the GL has met the formal basic requirement to continue to manage a JRG at the RCB for another two years. The final decision will be made by the Extended Board based on its evaluation of the additional criteria. A legal claim to a time limit, to an unlimited group management position or to the personnel and financial resources of a research group cannot be derived from this. If the assessment is negative, employment ends after 5 years and the JRG is dissolved.

Main criteria

- at least 6 original papers should be available as first, last or corresponding author in international journals (cumulative impact factor > 40, thereof at least one paper with IF>10 or in one of the TOP10 journals of the corresponding subject area; work carried out at the RCB; citations are charged equivalently). Up to three papers that have not been published with first or last authorship can be recognized as equivalent if they represent successful, new and genuine cooperation projects with other researchers at the RCB or with external scientists.
- at least 2 own third-party funding proposals of recognized public funding institutions (DFG, EU, BMBF) should have been approved as Principal Investigator. An application for external funding that was submitted together with other researchers at the RCB or with external scientists can be considered equivalent.
- the successful supervision of at least 1 PhD student and 2 students in Master programs should be proven
- the GL should have visibly integrated itself into the research concept of the RCB and have shown active participation in the fulfillment of its scientific mission
- the GL must have demonstrably participated in the structured career development program of the RCB

Additional criteria:

- Invitation to speak at national and international congresses
- Successful participation in peer-reviewed joint projects
- Patents applied for in which the RCB is also involved
- Reviews, book contributions, published abstracts

- Participation in committees of the RCB or assumption of important functions (e.g. commissioner for radiation protection or similar) for the RCB
- Participation in university courses of the RCB
- Co-organization of a conference at the RCB or the surrounding universities
- Successful establishment of new technologies at the RCB that benefit other RCB members (proof: co-authorship with other RCB divisions, acknowledgements; corresponding statement of the cooperation partners or the program areas).

In the evaluation according to main and additional criteria, the provision of the group with qualified, independently working personnel (postdocs, experienced TAs) as well as the existing networking with other research groups or in existing joint projects, if applicable, at the time of the group's establishment, are to be taken into account appropriately. Likewise, family-related absences from work must be taken into account in the performance evaluation.

In this context, the Extended Board may extend the period until the evaluation of the GL by up to 2 years in order to ensure greater equality of opportunity, or increase the staffing of the group in order to grant the head of the group improved conditions for meeting the criteria.

This regulation replaces all previous regulations concerning junior research groups at the RCB.

This regulation comes into force with the decision of the Board of Directors on 4 November 2019.