

## Guide for Applicants

### PNB Research Group

Thank you for your interest in the funding line **PNB Research Group** within the **Postdoc Network Brandenburg (PNB)**. A PNB Research Group provides the group leader being the PI with 4 years of funding to set up her/his own research group affiliated with one of the four universities in Brandenburg. This year's call invites postdoctoral researchers exclusively from the Life Sciences, Natural Sciences and Engineering Sciences as defined by the DFG (German Research Foundation)<sup>1</sup> to apply. Proposals with an interdisciplinary character are explicitly welcomed.

The following guidelines apply to proposals for a PNB Research Group and contain important information serving for a successful preparation of your proposal. Please read them carefully before submitting your application.

**Applications must be sent in English to [info@postdoc-network-brandenburg.de](mailto:info@postdoc-network-brandenburg.de). The application deadline is October 1st, 2024 (23:59 CEST).**

#### 1 What does the PNB offer?

The following four Brandenburg universities have founded the PNB in 2018: the Brandenburg University of Technology (BTU) Cottbus-Senftenberg, the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder), the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, and the University of Potsdam.

The PNB - a network for all postdocs working at the scientific institutions in Brandenburg - is providing funding opportunities for **national and international researchers with at least 2 years of experience in postdoctoral research** to further their academic careers by pursuing their individual research projects at one of the Brandenburg universities of their choice. The funding line **PNB Research Group** enables national and international scientists, to concentrate for 4 years entirely on their proposed research projects. In addition, a PNB Research Group offers the financial support necessary for hiring the scientific staff required for the proposed project to be successful.

#### 2 Applicant eligibility

In order to take part in the selection process, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Eligible applicants must have a completed research doctorate (PhD) and have at least 2 years of postdoctoral experience. Candidates with a completed habilitation are not eligible.
- Applications must be complete (see required documents in Section 3).
- Applications have to be written in English.

Women are especially encouraged to apply. Brandenburg universities are family-friendly and offer numerous possibilities of support for researchers with children (e.g. child-care facilities, day-care

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dfg.de/resource/blob/331950/85717c3edb9ea8bd453d5110849865d3/fachsystematik-2024-2028-en-data.pdf>

organized during lectures, conferences, other scientific events, etc.). The universities will provide further information if necessary.

### 3 Required documents

Complete applications for a PNB Research Group (in electronic form, **one pdf-document**) must include:

- CV
- Electronic copies of academic certificates and documents
- Publication list
- List of conducted courses/lectures
- Summary of externally funded projects (third party funding)
- Contact details of at least two unbiased reviewers without common publications during the last two years. These reviewers have to be outstanding experts in the applicant's research field.
- Outline of the proposed research project tailored to the research profile of the chosen university
- Letter of support from the head of the chosen department of the host university

#### 3.1 How to obtain a letter of support

Applicants have to submit a letter of support from the head of the chosen institute/department of the host university. After you have decided which university and corresponding institute/department fits best to your proposed scientific project, get in touch with the head of this institute/department at the chosen university. Present your research project to her/him, ask whether she/he is willing to support your research interest, and if she/he is willing to write a letter of support on your behalf.

#### 3.2 Dealing with AI-based applications

In general, the PNB accepts applications created with the help of artificial intelligence (AI). However, we consider the applicant to be fully responsible for the content and compliance with research integrity. If you use AI as an auxiliary tool in the preparation of your application, please indicate this in a scientifically appropriate way.

In this context, the PNB refers to the DFG (German Research Foundation), which has published initial guidelines for the use of AI for text and image creation. Please take a look at

<https://wissenschaftliche-integritaet.de/en/use-generative-models/>

### 4 Decision making process

Once you have submitted your research proposal together with all necessary documents as **one single pdf** document to the PNB, your proposal will formally be examined at the PNB head office. Subsequently you will receive an email confirming the receipt of your complete application.

Complete proposals will be externally reviewed by experts using a points awarding procedure. This evaluation assesses

- the quality of the project,
- the qualifications and expertise of the applicant,
- the quality and uniqueness of the objectives and work plan; consideration will also be given to how the proposed project fits into the host's research and teaching activities,
- the feasibility of the proposed project as explained in the detailed research plan.

A ranking list will be composed based on these results and the most promising candidates will be invited to an online interview.

#### 4.1 Decision committee

The selection panel consists of representatives of the Brandenburg universities and external experts who will meet in person. This panel examines the reviewers' selection, assists in the online interviews, and ultimately identifies one project, which will be recommended for funding.

#### 4.2 Timetable

Publication of the call:	July 2024
Application deadline:	<b>October 1st, 2024 (23:59 CEST)</b>
Examination of applications for eligibility and completeness:	2 weeks
Review process:	12 weeks
Selection panel meeting:	planned for January 2025
Response to unsuccessful applicants:	within four weeks after the selection decision
Earliest start of research group:	March/April 2025
Latest start of research group:	<b>no later than 6 months after the written confirmation</b>

## 5 Contact details

For any questions concerning your proposal, please contact:

### Postdoc Network Brandenburg

Dr. Heike KÜchmeister

Dr. Katharina Lüning

Email: [info@postdoc-network-brandenburg.de](mailto:info@postdoc-network-brandenburg.de)