

ANNOUNCEMENT
GUIDELINES

aventis
foundation

Early Career Researcher Award

YOUR BRIDGE TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER IN LIFE SCIENCES

A microscopic view of cells, showing various structures and organelles, with a prominent cell membrane and internal organelles. The image is overlaid on a dark blue background that transitions into a lighter blue and orange gradient.

The logo for the Life Sciences Bridge Award, featuring a stylized white arch above the text.**LIFE SCIENCES
BRIDGE AWARD**

LIFE SCIENCES BRIDGE AWARD

The **Aventis Foundation** is an independent non-profit foundation headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. In 2018, the Foundation has founded a research award for early career researchers in the field of life sciences, to help them successfully establish themselves in their academic field, pursue innovative approaches and boost their chances of gaining full professorship. We want to provide individual support to talented researchers, to support them to conduct their own independent research and encourage them to pursue bold and unconventional ideas, in order to successfully cross the bridge between doctorate and full professorship – hence the name “Life Sciences Bridge Award”.

ENDOWMENT AND TARGET GROUP

Aventis Foundation Life Sciences Bridge Awards are endowed with a subsidy amount of € 100.000 each. The awards will be given to young academics, e. g. research group leaders (three years after the doctorate at the earliest), junior professors and tenure-track-professors who aim for an academic career but do not yet hold full and permanent professorship. The award specifically promotes innovative approaches in life sciences, i. e. biochemistry, biology, chemistry, medicine, pharmaceutical studies – each of which may be combined with mathematics, engineering and IT. Each year's awards will be granted in cooperation with applicants' universities. To this end, the Foundation will partner with 30 research-intensive German universities. Accordingly, researchers administered by these universities will be eligible to apply for the award this year.

Portraits of previous winners can be found on the Aventis Foundation's blog:
<https://bridge.aventis-foundation.org>

GUIDELINES FOR USING THE SUBSIDY AMOUNT

The subsidy amount will be administered and disbursed by the respective university. € 10.000 of the prize money will go directly to the award winners as a personal grant. The remaining € 90.000 will be administered by the university and can be used by the award winners at their own discretion for personnel, material and other expenses, that they are compatible with the procurement guidelines of the corresponding university.

The grant shall be spent within three years from its conferral. Prior expenses are not eligible for compensation. The money shall not be used to finance the researcher's own position. All equipment and devices purchased will be fully owned by the university. If the award winner happens to leave the university, the prize money can not be transferred. Remaining funds need to be reimbursed to the Aventis Foundation.

LIFE SCIENCES BRIDGE AWARD

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Announcement:	March 1, 2026
Deadline for applications:	April 30, 2026
Announcement of award winners:	September 2026

Candidates can apply directly via the Foundation's application portal www.bridge.aventis-foundation.org/apply, excluding legal recourse. They will be asked to submit personal information such as contact data, curriculum vitae, PhD conferral date, current employment status, career goals and information on their academic research including the field description, unit, current position, field, and outline of their current research activities. They can upload no more than three top publications. Additional information on the application documents and process can be found on the Aventis Foundation's blog bridge.aventis-foundation.org.

PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES

For 2026 the foundation will partner with the following German universities: RWTH Aachen, Free University and Humboldt University, Berlin (including Charité), Technical University Berlin, Ruhr University Bochum, University of Bonn, University of Bremen, Technical University Darmstadt, Technical University Dresden, University Duisburg-Essen, Heinrich-Heine University Düsseldorf, Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Goethe University Frankfurt, University of Freiburg, University of Göttingen, University of Hamburg, Leibniz University Hanover, Heidelberg University, Friedrich Schiller University Jena, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Kiel University, University of Cologne, Leipzig University, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, LMU München, Technical University of Munich, University of Münster, University of Stuttgart, University of Tübingen, and Julius Maximilians University Würzburg

SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURE

Applications submitted on time will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Personality:** qualification, experience abroad, leadership, potential of the applicant
- **Research:** relevance, novelty, applicability, added value for the field
- **Publications:** quality, visibility, breakthrough, citation frequency
- **Independence:** thematic, publishing and financial independence
- **Innovation and transfer:** breakthroughs, patents, industrial cooperation

The applications will be reviewed by a jury of experts comprising members of the Foundation's board of trustees and external consultants. The final funding decisions will be made by the Aventis Foundation's board of trustees and board of directors.

LIFE SCIENCES BRIDGE AWARD

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

The award winners are required to report annually on the progress of their scientific work. The reports shall be published on the project blog bridge.aventis-foundation.org and presented in a way that is comprehensible for inclined non-professionals and advanced high school or university students. They are further required to submit a final comprehensive report.

CONTACT

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