

To all
Postdoctoral Researchers of
The following research institutions:

Heidelberg University
Central Institute for Mental Health (ZI),
Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW),
European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL),
German Cancer Research Centre (DKFZ),
Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities,
Heidelberg Institute for Theoretical Studies (HITS),
Heidelberg University of Education (PH Heidelberg),
Hochschule für Jüdische Studien (HfJS),
Institute for the German Language (IDS), and
Max Planck Institutes in Heidelberg

Prof. Dr Michael Boutros
Prof. Dr. Friederike Nüssel
Board of Directors of the Marsilius Kolleg

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Heidelberg, 26 May 2026

6th Call for applications for the YOUNG MARSILIUS FELLOWSHIPS for interdisciplinary research and science communication; motto of the year: "On & Off"

Duration: 1 October 2026 to 30 September 2027; Application deadline: 28 June 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

The *Marsilius Kolleg* of Heidelberg University invites you to apply for a *Young Marsilius Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Research and Science Communication*. These fellowships offer excellent postdoctoral researchers from Heidelberg University and the surrounding extra-university research institutions an opportunity to actively participate in, and contribute to, the Marsilius Kolleg. As a Young Marsilius Fellow, you will have the opportunity to engage in an intensive exchange with other postdoctoral researchers and to participate in an interdisciplinary project to be developed together in collaboration. In addition, Young Marsilius Fellows take part in joint events with experts from the field of science communication. They receive a budget of €5,000 to be used freely for their own research and for academic training (subject to the applicable usage policy).

All postdoctoral researchers at Heidelberg University and surrounding institutions (see the list of addressees) whose doctorate was awarded no more than 4 years before 1 October 2026 (the start of the fellowship) are eligible to apply. In certain well-justified cases, exceptions to this requirement can be made, e.g. in the case of doctoral students who are well advanced and have a clear postdoctoral perspective at Heidelberg research institutions. (Junior) group leaders, junior professors or advanced *habilitands*, on the other hand, do not belong to the target group of the fellowship. The fellows will primarily communicate in English. Applicants should have sufficient

knowledge of English to be able to actively participate in the discussions. Applications can be submitted in English as well as in German.

The 'motto of the year' for the Young Marsilius Fellows 2026-27 will be "On & Off". This serves as a starting point for applications and as a leitmotif for a joint project, which will culminate in a final event. Here the Marsilius Kolleg is consciously adopting the guiding motif of the 27th issue of the research journal "Ruperto Carola". The current issue illustrates the broad and diverse applicability of this topic (mainly in German):

<https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/press-media/publications/research-magazine/on-off>

We would like to encourage all interested postdoctoral researchers to apply for a Young Marsilius Fellowship. If you are considering applying, we recommend that you first seek advice from the Managing Director of the Marsilius Kolleg, Tobias Just. Explanations of the selection procedure and conditions for application can be found on the following pages of this letter.

The deadline **for applications is 28 June 2026**. This deadline is not an absolute cut-off, but we cannot guarantee that applications received after this date can be considered.

Selection Procedure and Criteria

Young Marsilius Fellows are selected by the Marsilius Kolleg based on a recommendation by a multidisciplinary selection committee, which also includes an external member from the field of science communication. Selection criteria are:

- academic excellence demonstrated by the applicant's dissertation, publications, prizes and other awards
- willingness and ability to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue
- openness to participating in activities concerning science communication
- the quality of a letter in which, with reference to the motto of the year "On & Off" the candidates explain their motivation to participate in the interdisciplinary discourse of the Marsilius Kolleg and in a reciprocal exchange between academia and society

Format and Design

The programme takes into account the many requirements of the postdoctoral phase of an academic career. This means in particular that the time commitment of the Fellowship is limited, focused and plannable. The annual programme of the Young Marsilius Fellows consists of:

- The one-day kick-off and planning session:
Tue. 13 Oct 2026, 9:00 – 17:00
- a two and a half day retreat outside of Heidelberg:
Wed.-Fri. 03 – 05 March 2027
- a joint session with the Marsilius Fellows: Mon. 12 April 2027, 17:30 – 21:00
- five half-day joint workshops (9:00 – 13:00):
Wed. 18 Nov 2026, Wed. 16 Dec 2026, Thu. 28 Jan 2027, Wed. 12 May 2027 and Tue. 15 June 2027
- A workshops with each of the Nature Marsilius Visiting Professors in the winter semester 2026/27 (Tue. 12 Jan 2027, 9:00 – 14:00) and in the summer semester of 2027 (tba)
- A final event on Thu. 15 July 2027

The Fellows decide jointly on the content of the programme, the joint project and the final symposium. The Marsilius Kolleg is available for advice and support.

Expectations

As far as possible, Fellows are expected take part in all events of their Young Marsilius cohort. In addition, each Fellow should make at least one substantive contribution, such as a presentation, during the course of their year at the Marsilius Kolleg.

Use of the Young Marsilius Fellowships funds

The Marsilius-Kolleg provides all Young Marsilius Fellows with a budget of €5,000 each to cover expenses for their own research and academic training. The funds are administrated by the Marsilius Kolleg. The current usage policies of the Excellence Strategy apply.

Applications

Interested postdoctoral researchers should contact the office of the Marsilius Kolleg. We would also like to draw your attention to the information available on our homepage:

<https://www.marsilius-kolleg.uni-heidelberg.de/>

Applicants are requested to complete the online application form, which will be available on the Marsilius Kolleg homepage June 2026, and to send it by the given deadline. Applications received by other means will not be considered. Current information on the call for applications can be found at:

<https://www.marsilius-kolleg.uni-heidelberg.de/de/forschung/young-marsilius-fellows/young-marsilius-fellowships>

Yours sincerely,



Michael Boutros



Friederike Nüssel