



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## for Early Career Researchers

Dr. Astrid Evers | CAU Kiel | 12.09.2018

# Topics

## 1 | The DFG – About Us

## 2 | DFG Funding Opportunities

## 3 | Proposal and Review Process

## 4 | Advice for Applicants

# The DFG – About Us

## Our organisation

The DFG is the largest **independent** research funding organisation in Germany.

It is an **association** under German private law.

Its **member organisations** include German universities, non-university research institutions, academies of sciences and humanities, and scientific associations.

It serves **all branches** of science and the humanities by **funding research projects**.



# The DFG – About Us

## Our mandate

The DFG facilitates national and international **cooperation** among researchers.

It provides scientific **policy advice** and fosters relations with the **private sector**.

It promotes **gender equality** in the German scientific and academic communities.

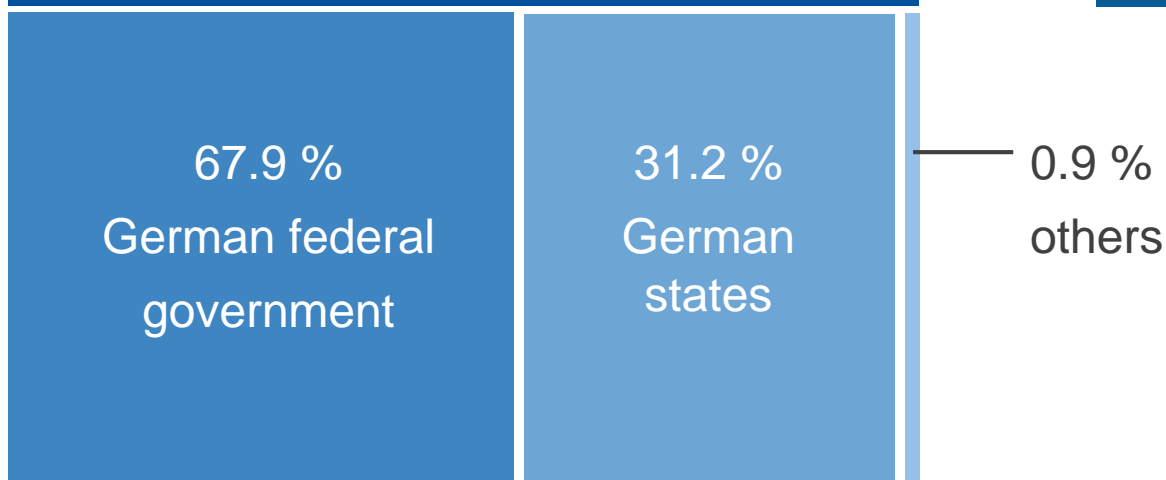
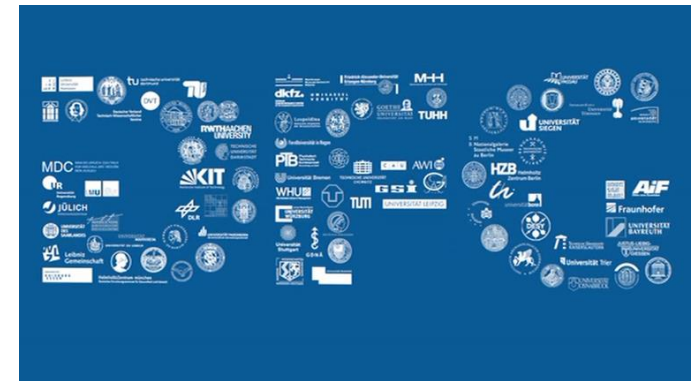
It encourages the advancement and training of **early-career researchers**.



# The DFG – About Us

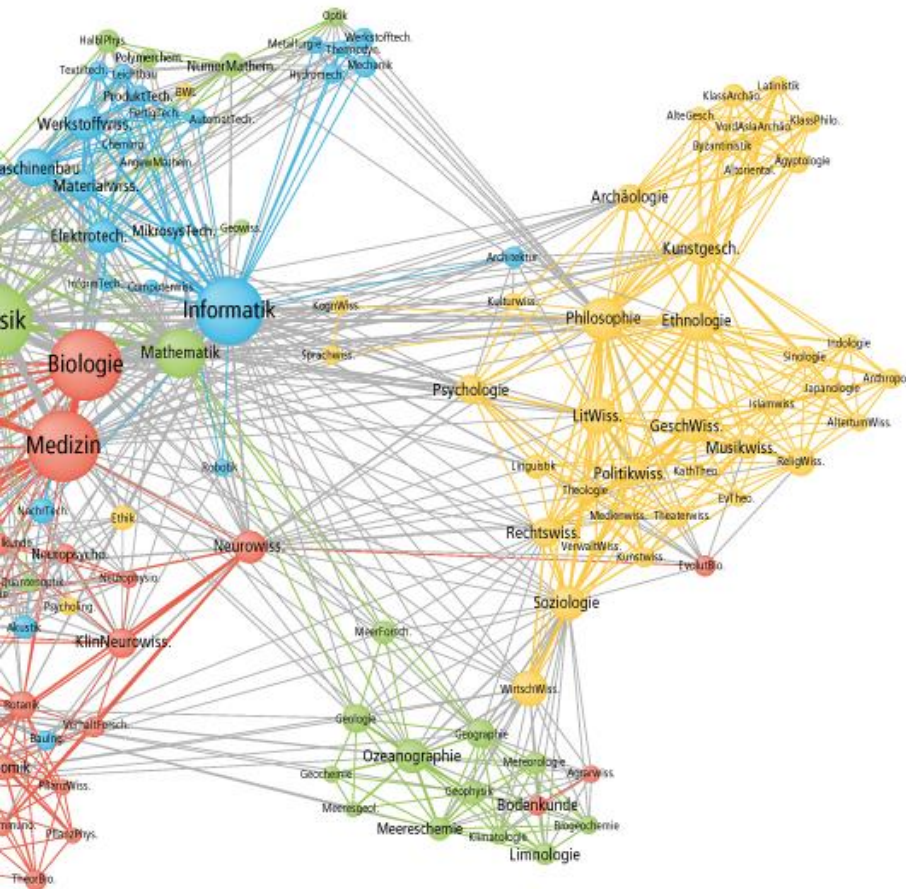
## Our budget

Total budget approx. **€ 3.2 billion** in 2017.



# The DFG – About Us

## Funded projects

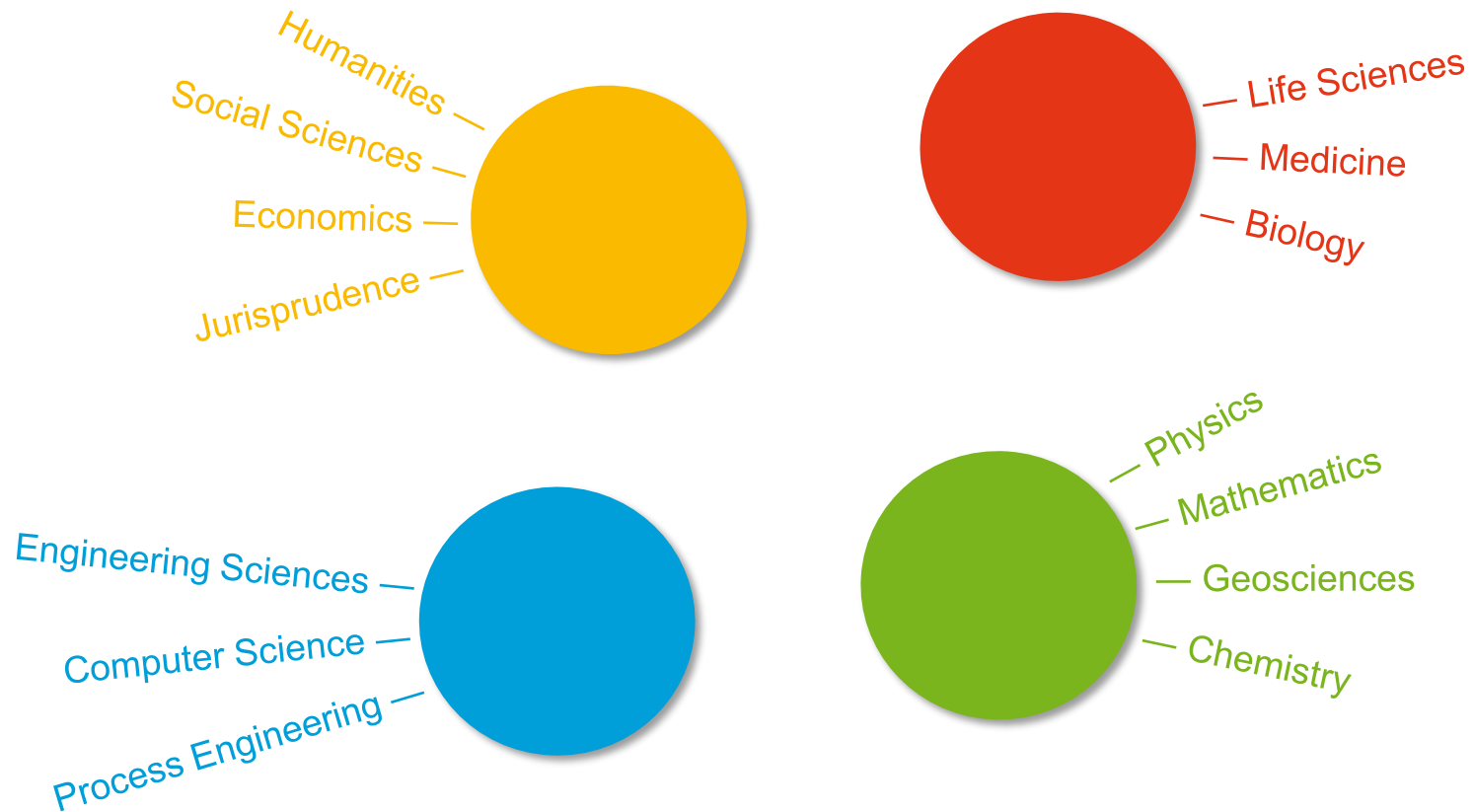


In **2017**, the DFG funded over **32,000** projects

- Individual research projects
- Research collaborations
- Research infrastructure
- Coordinated programmes

# The DFG – About Us

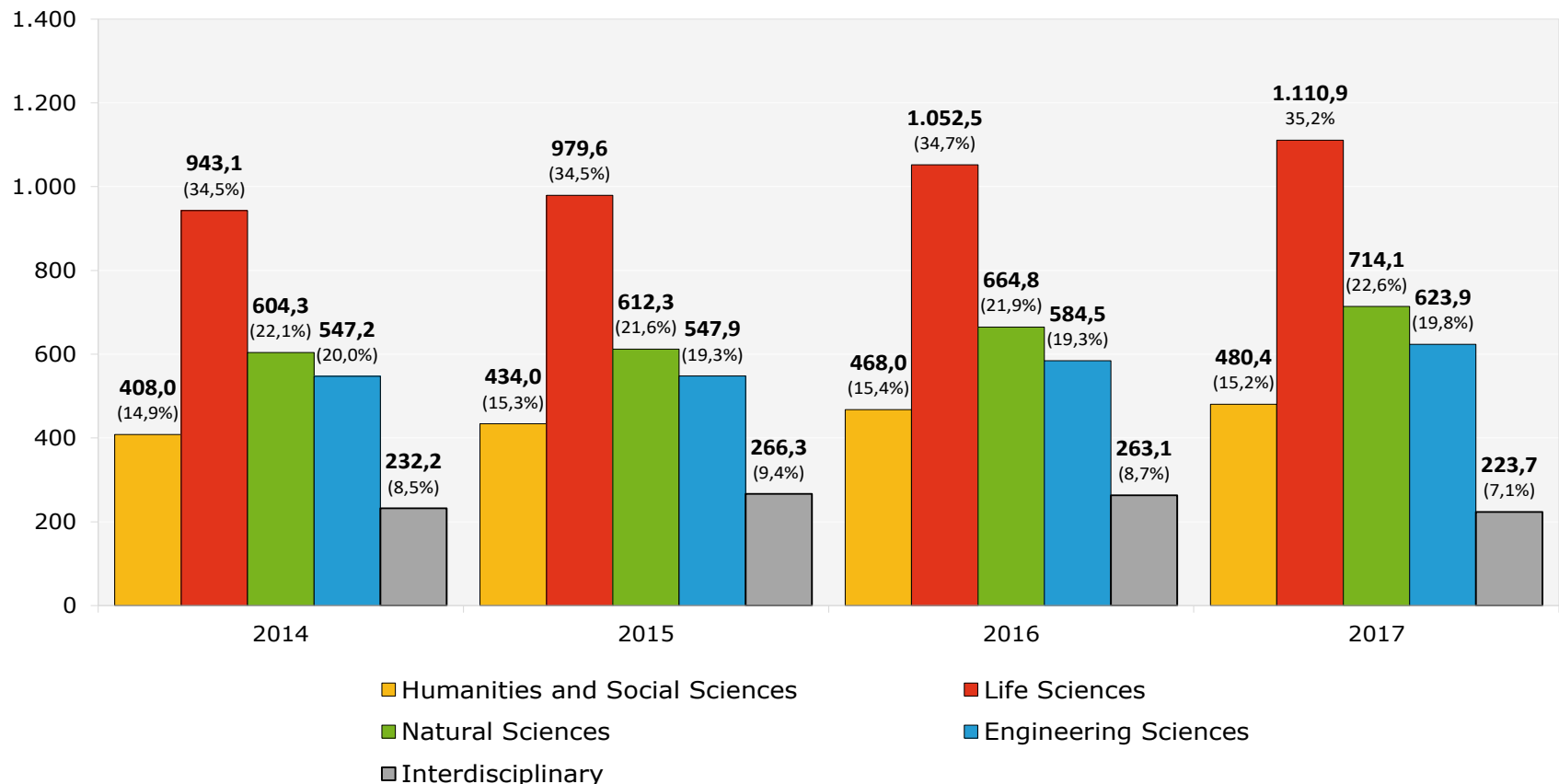
## Subject areas



# The DFG – About Us

## Funding by discipline 2014-2017

Amount of research funding awarded by scientific discipline for each calendar year  
(in €m and %)





# The DFG – About Us

## Funding principles

- ▶ **Research topic:** open, bottom-up
- ▶ **Type of research:** basic research in any field of science and the humanities
- ▶ **Evaluation:** multi-level peer-review
- ▶ **Deadlines:** none\*
- ▶ **Note:** individual career phases and family-related career breaks are considered

\* Exceptions: Priority Programmes, international activities



# The DFG – About Us

## Eligibility



### Researchers

- ▶ who have completed their scientific training, i.e. who hold a **doctorate** and
- ▶ who would like to work **in Germany**
- ▶ of **any age**

# Topics

1 | The DFG – About Us

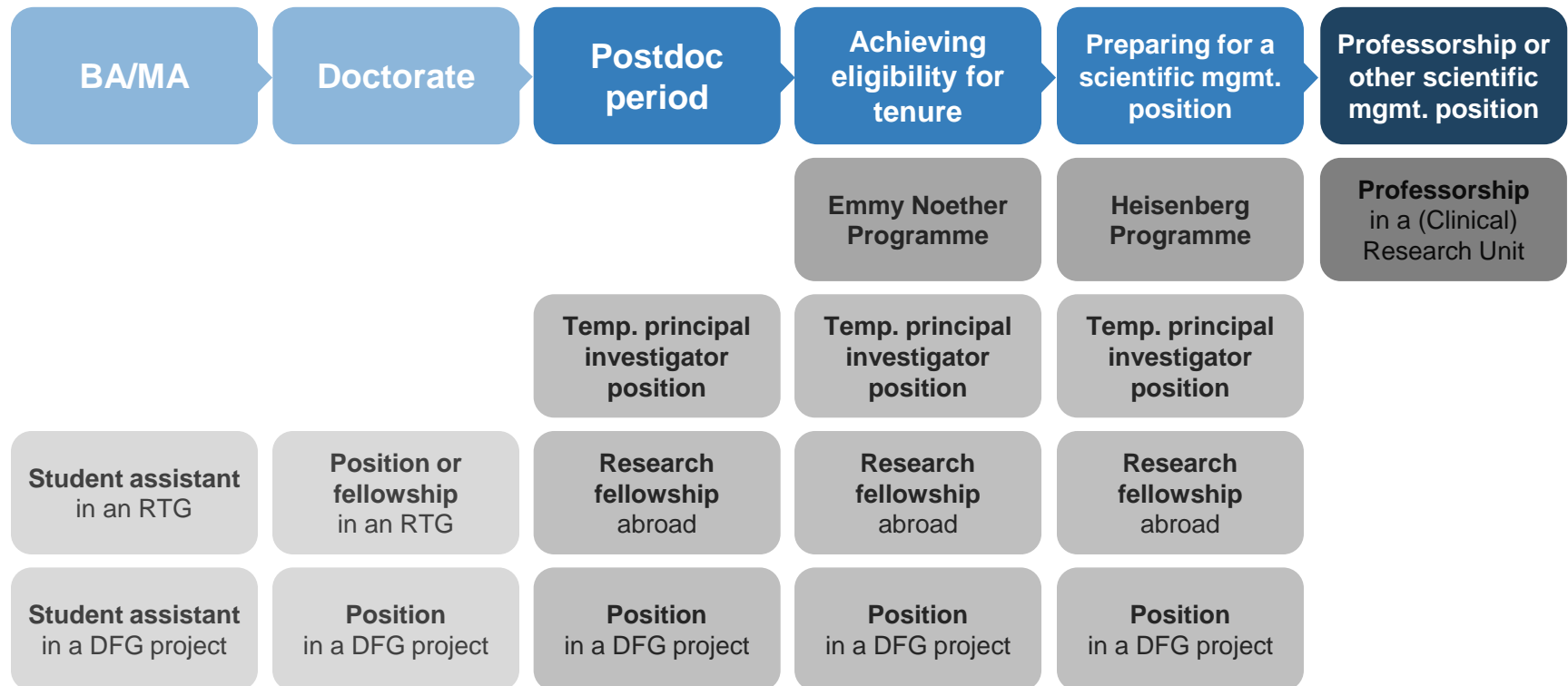
**2 | DFG Funding Opportunities**

3 | Proposal and Review Process

4 | Useful Advice for Applicants

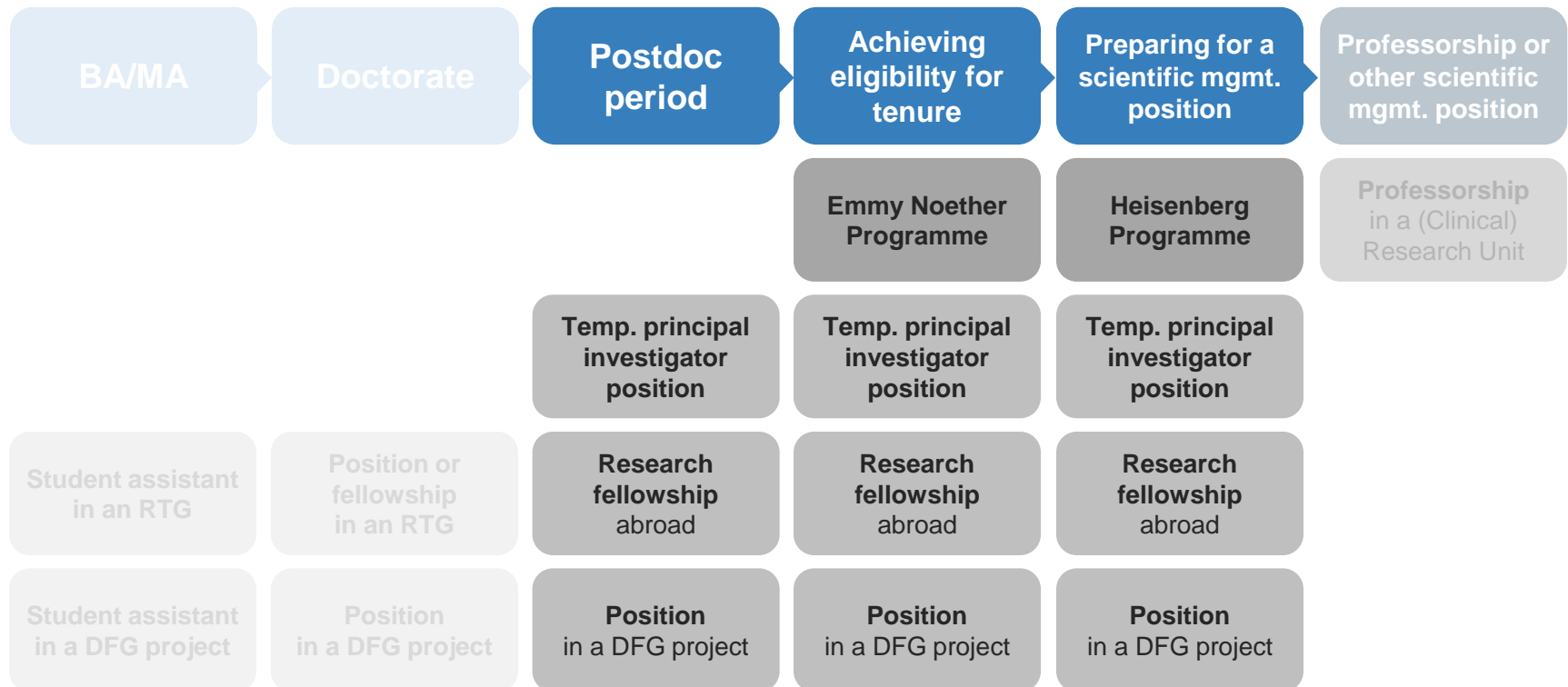
# DFG Funding Opportunities

## For early career researchers



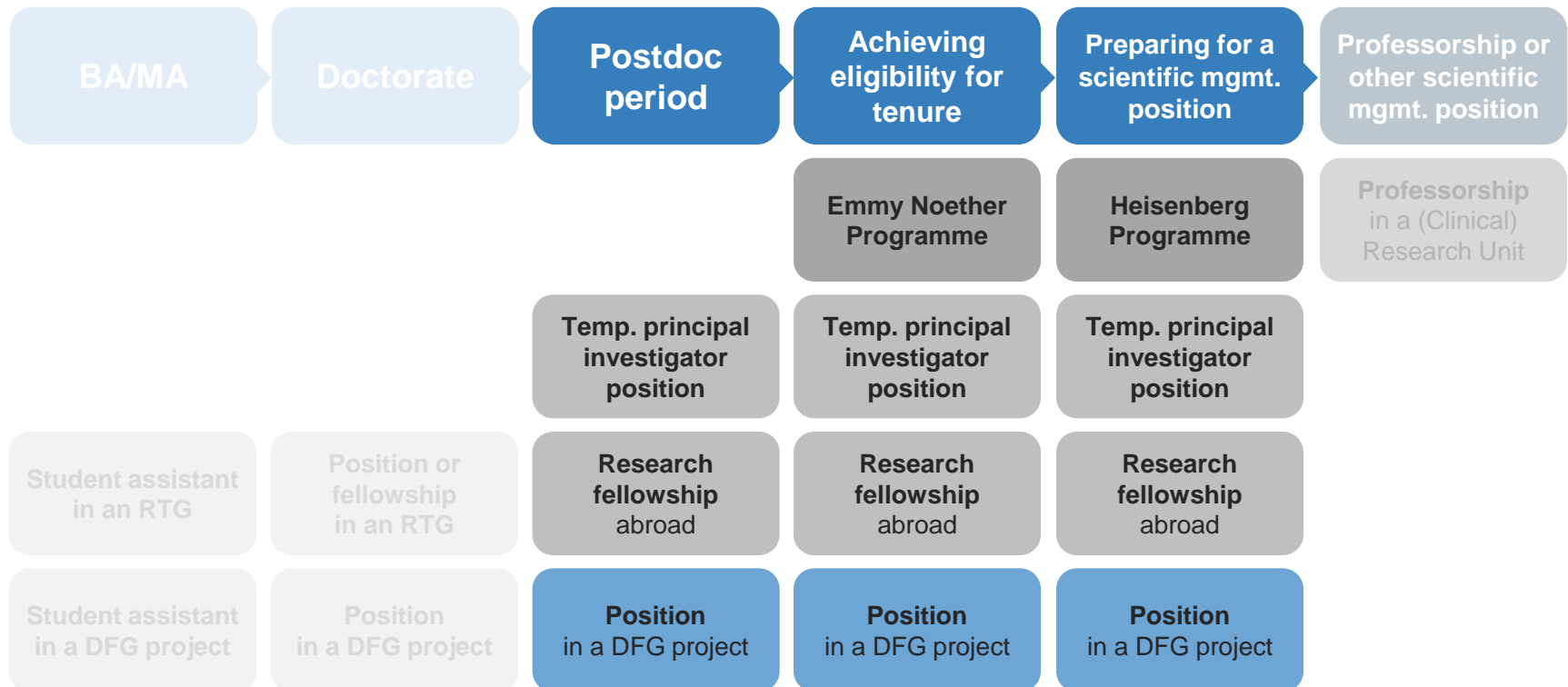
# DFG Funding Opportunities

## For early career researchers



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## For early career researchers



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Working in a DFG-funded project

### More than 1,000 positions for early career researchers:

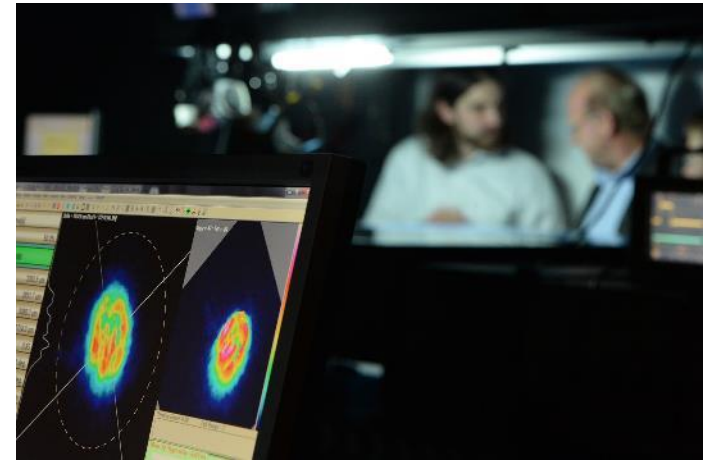
- ▶ Individual projects (*Einzelförderung*)
- ▶ Research Units (*Forschungsgruppen*)
- ▶ Priority Programmes (*Schwerpunktprogramme*)
- ▶ Collaborative Research Centres (*Sonderforschungsbereiche*)
- ▶ Research Training Groups (*Graduiertenkollegs*)



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Working in a DFG-funded project

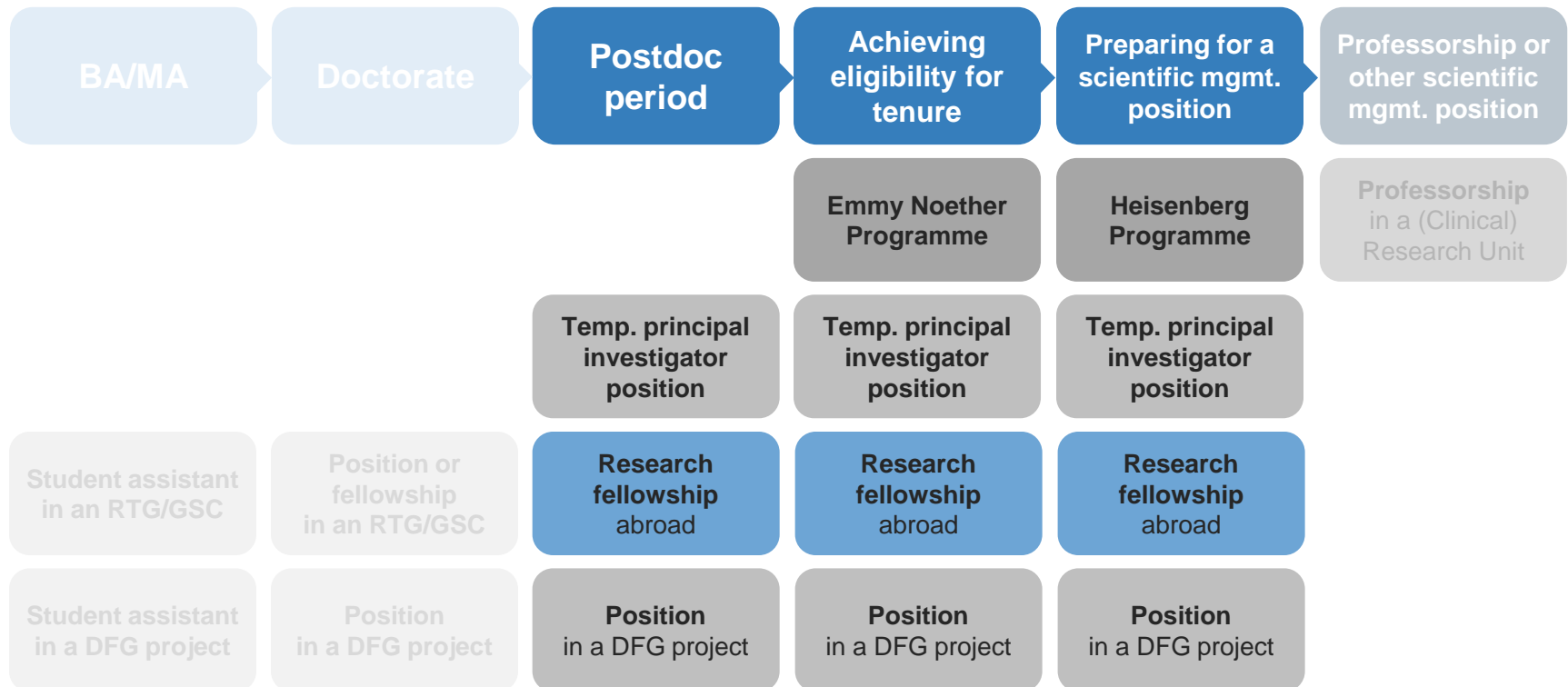
- ▶ Positions for **doctoral researchers** and **postdocs**
- ▶ At a German university or research institute
- ▶ **Duration** of funding depends on project
- ▶ **Position** (E13-E14 TvöD/TV-L)
- ▶ **Apply with the project's PI**





# DFG Funding Opportunities

## For early career researchers



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Research fellowships (*Forschungsstipendien*)

- ▶ Fellowships for **postdoctoral** researchers for a research project **abroad**
  - ▶ Duration of max. 2 years
  - ▶ Possibility of max. 6-months return grant
  - ▶ Basic fellowship allowance = €1,750
    - + allowance for direct project costs
    - + foreign allowance
    - + cost of living allowance
    - + child allowance (where applicable)
    - + travel allowance
- **award calculator** at DFG website

### ▶ Proposal to the DFG

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# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Research fellowships (*Forschungsstipendien*)

### Benefits for fellows with children:

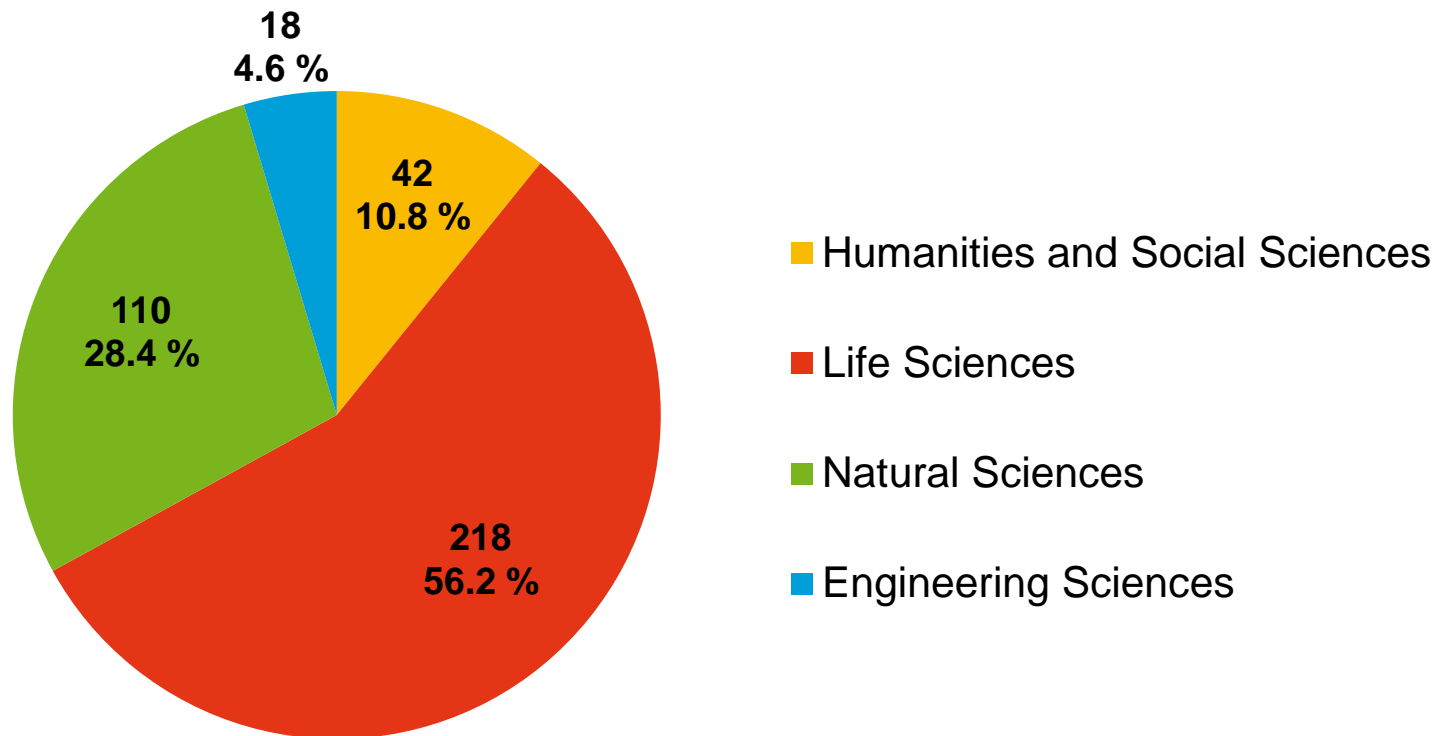
- ▶ €400 **child allowance** for the first child  
+ €100 for each additional child
- ▶ The fellowship can be **extended** by max. 12 months  
or costs for **childcare** can be reimbursed
  - Up to  $12 \times €1,750 = \text{max. } €21,000$
  - Childcare costs must be verified by presenting invoices  
and payment receipts
- ▶ Extension and reimbursement of childcare costs can  
be **combined**



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Research fellowships (*Forschungsstipendien*)

Number of new research fellowships awarded by scientific discipline 2017

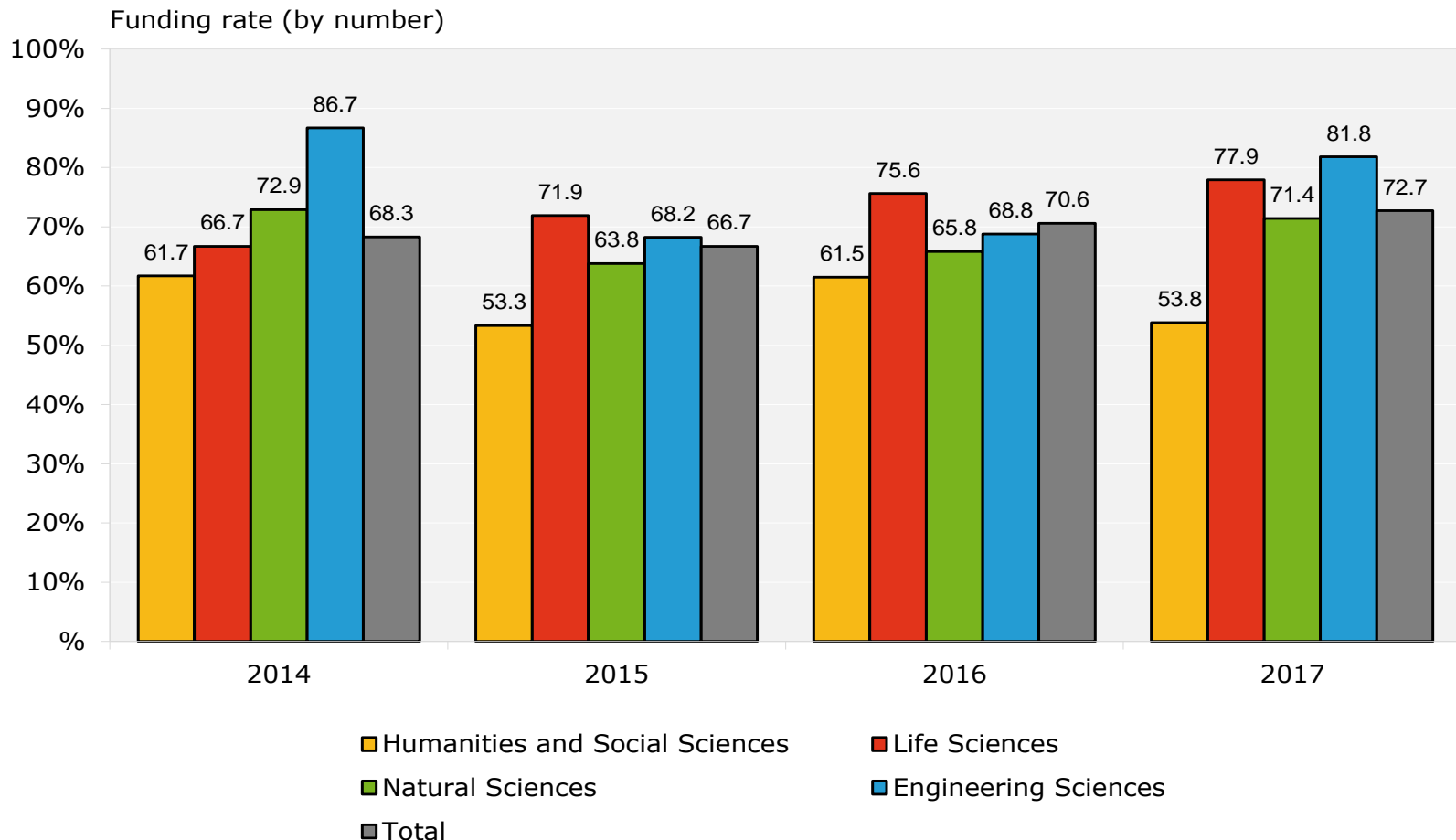


388 new research fellowships (not including return grants)

# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Research fellowships (*Forschungsstipendien*)

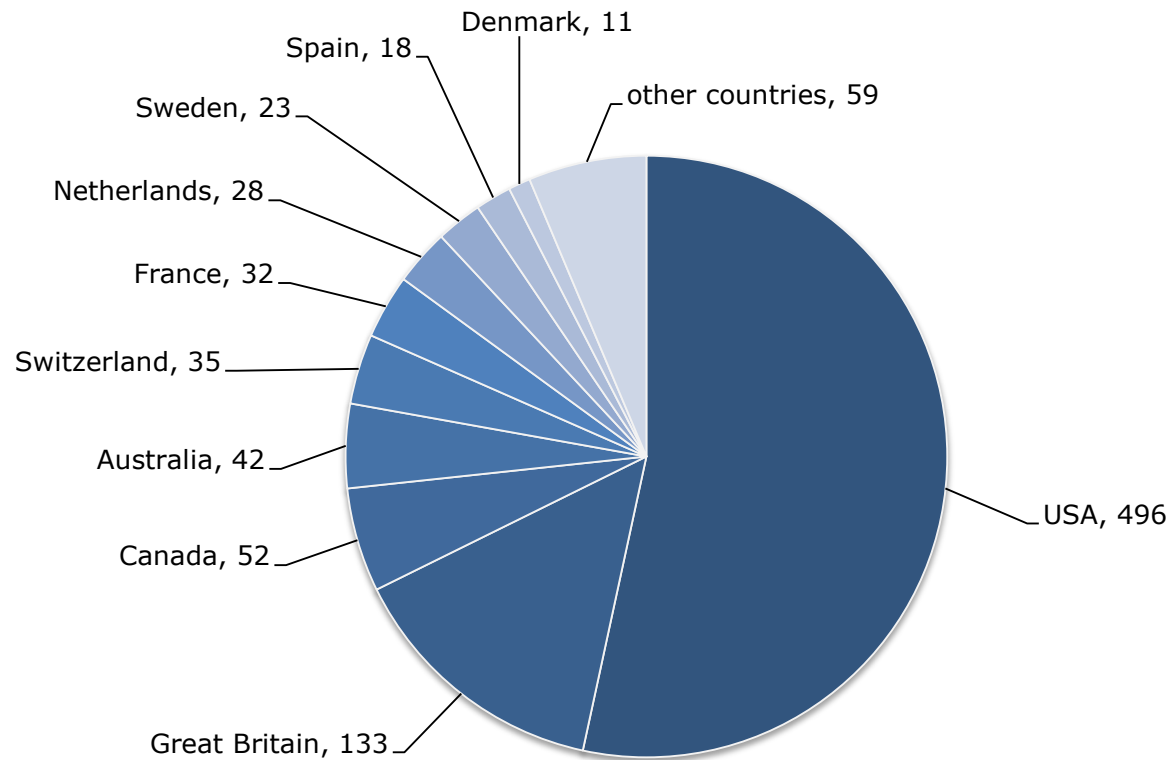
### Funding rates for research fellowships (not including return grants)



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Research fellowships (*Forschungsstipendien*)

### Research fellowships – destinations for research visits 2017



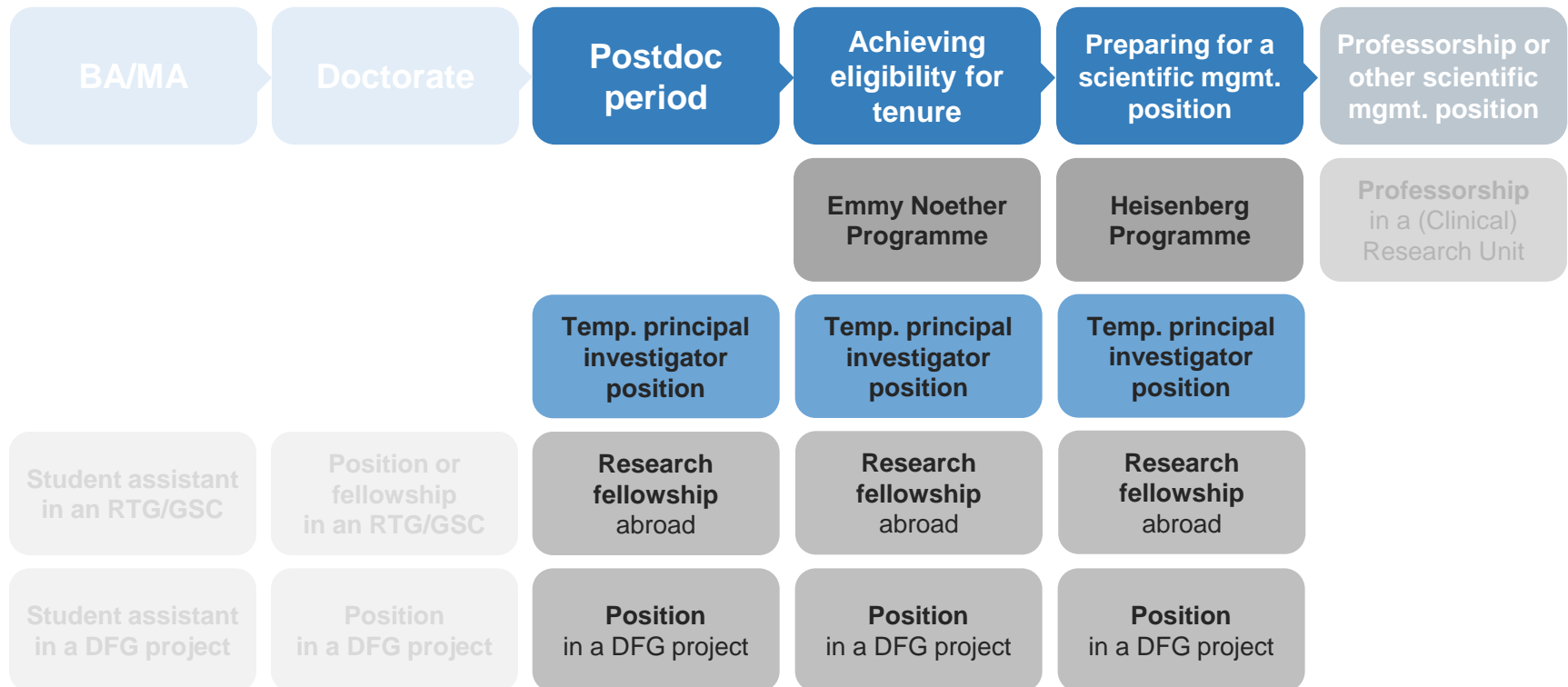
Based on ongoing research fellowships in 2017, not including return grants.  
Recipients of research fellowships can undertake more than one research visit.

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# DFG Funding Opportunities

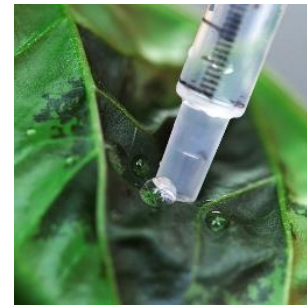
## For early career researchers



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Individual Grants Programme (*Sachbeihilfe*)

- ▶ **Individual Grants** offer an opportunity to pursue your own research project in Germany
- ▶ Duration for up to 3 years
- ▶ Allows **flexibility**: Funding for staff, consumables, travel, instrumentation, publication funding etc.
- ▶ Additional module: **Temporary position for principal investigator (*Eigene Stelle*)**





# DFG Funding Opportunities

Temporary position for principal investigators (*Eigene Stelle*)

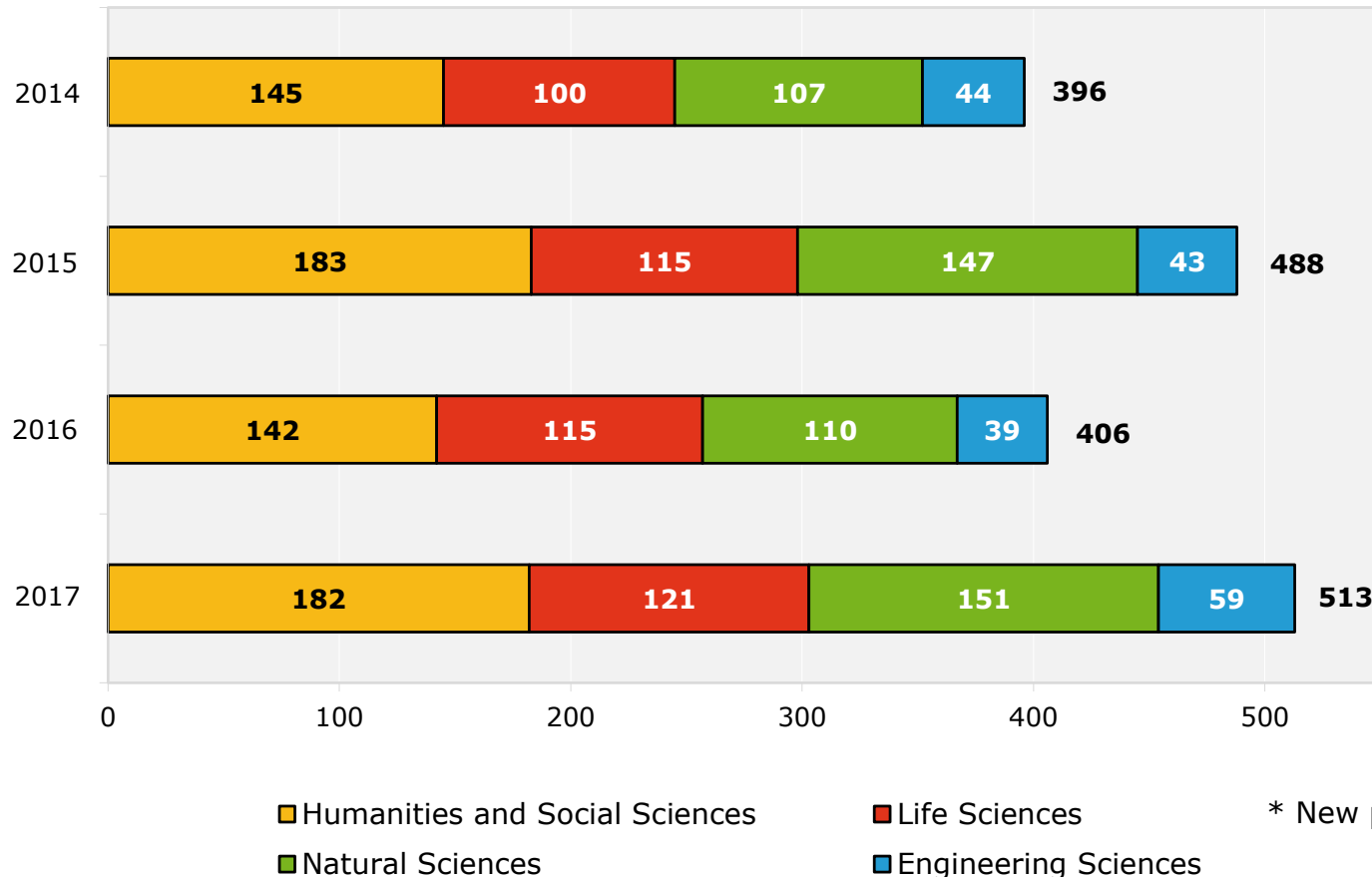
- ▶ For **postdoctoral** researchers
- ▶ Research in **Germany** → the host institution becomes the employer
- ▶ **Duration** of generally up to 3 years
- ▶ **Position** (E13 to E14 TVöD/TV-L) + project funds
- ▶ **Proposal to the DFG**



# DFG Funding Opportunities

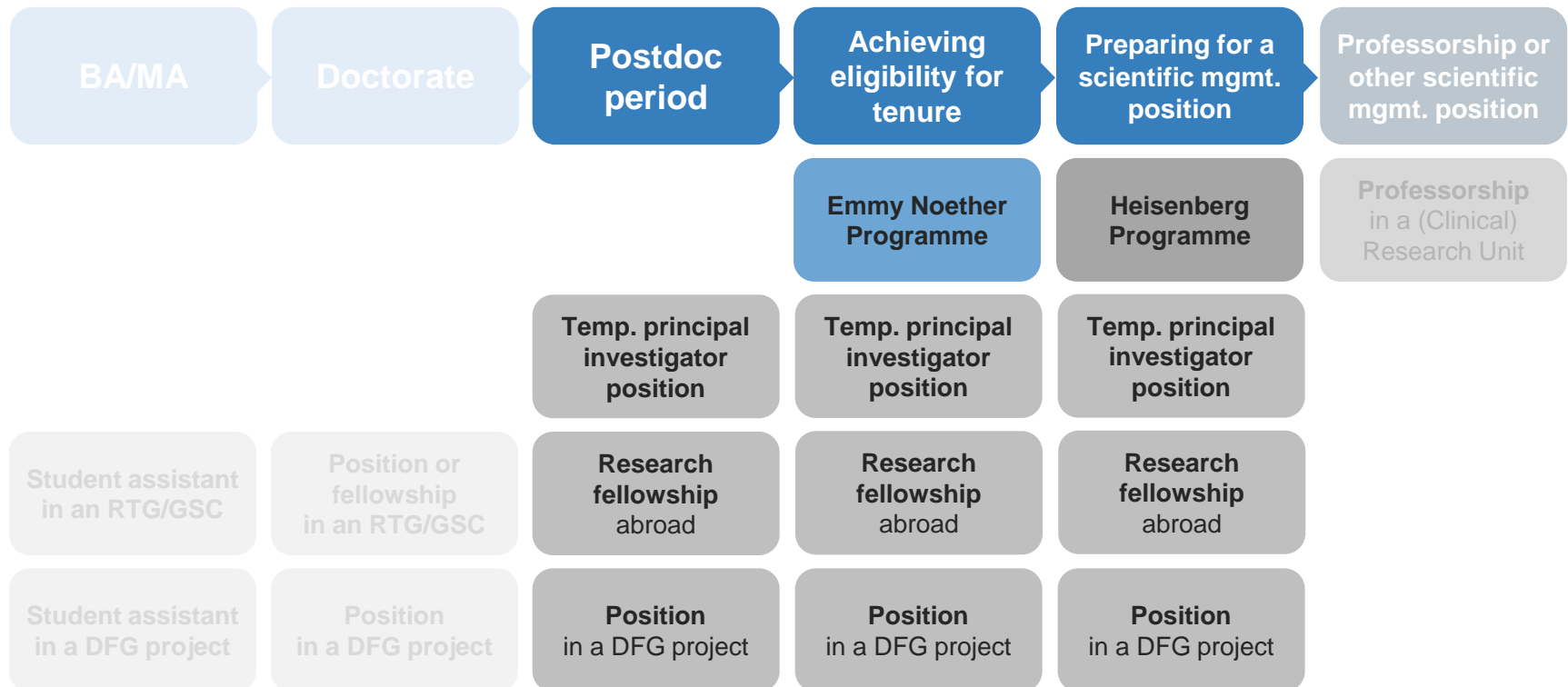
Temporary position for principal investigators (*Eigene Stelle*)

New awards in temporary positions for principal investigators\* scheme by scientific discipline  
2014 to 2017



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## For early career researchers



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Emmy Noether Programme

### Aims

- ▶ Path to early **academic independence** by leading own **independent junior research group**
- ▶ Eligibility for professorial appointment



### Requirements

- ▶ For excellently qualified **postdocs** with an outstanding **research project**
- ▶ Postdoctoral **research experience** of at least 2 and max. 4 years (medicine: up to 6 years), +2 years per child
- ▶ Substantial **international research experience**

# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Emmy Noether Programme

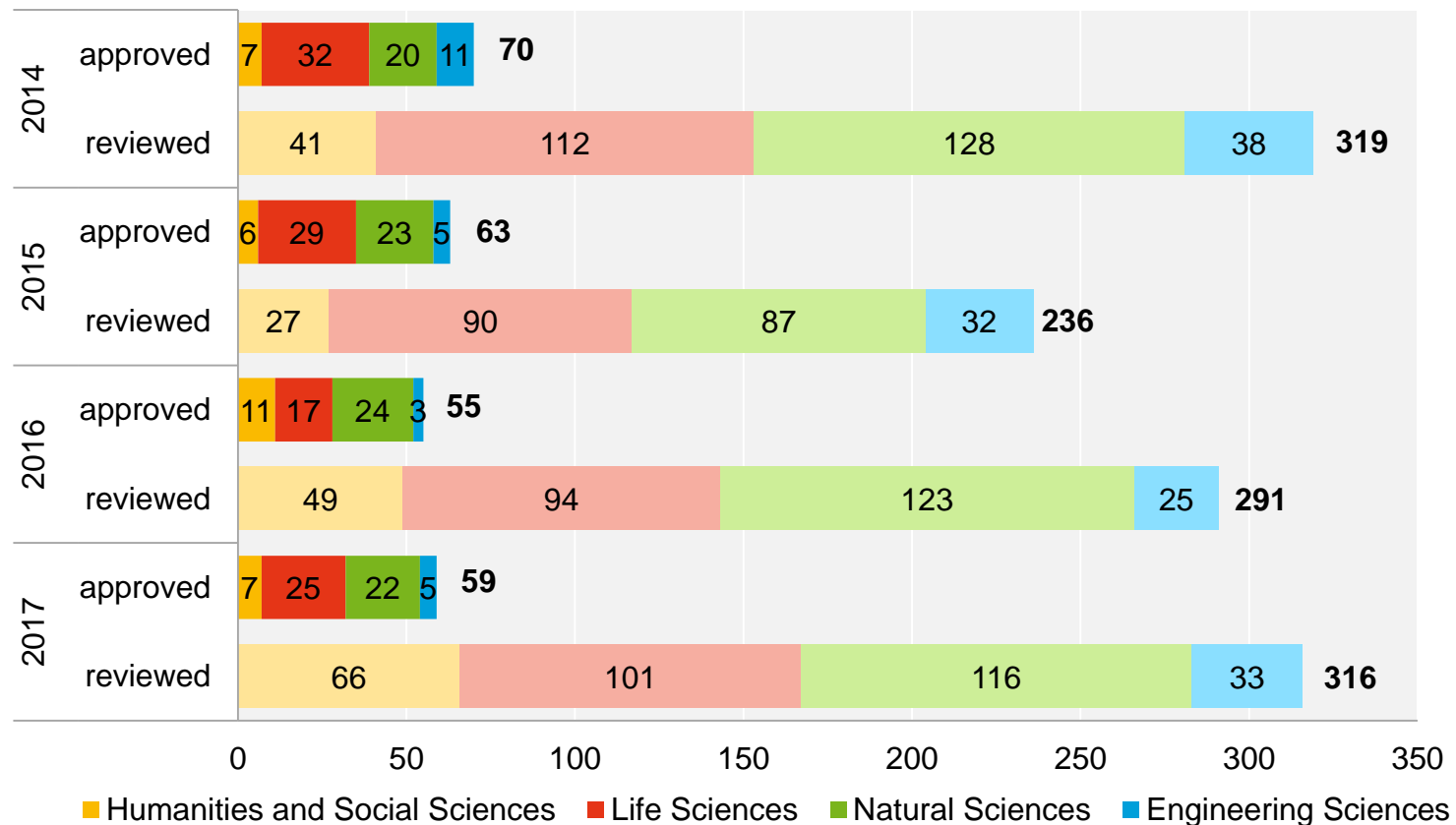


- ▶ Research in **Germany** → host institution becomes the employer
- ▶ **Duration** of generally 6 years new
- ▶ Group leader **position** (E15 TVöD/TV-L), positions for staff, consumables, travel, instrumentation, publication funding etc.
- ▶ Position for temporary substitutes for **clinicians** new
- ▶ **Proposal to the DFG**

# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Emmy Noether Programme

Number of newly approved and reviewed Emmy Noether independent junior research groups by scientific discipline 2014 to 2017



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Study *Forschungsförderung und Karrierewege* (2017)



### Study about DFG funding instruments and career paths

- ▶ Compares the career paths of more than one thousand applicants in 2007 and 2008 in funding programmes relevant to early-career researchers
- ▶ Short version (“DFG infobrief”) available in English





# DFG Funding Opportunities

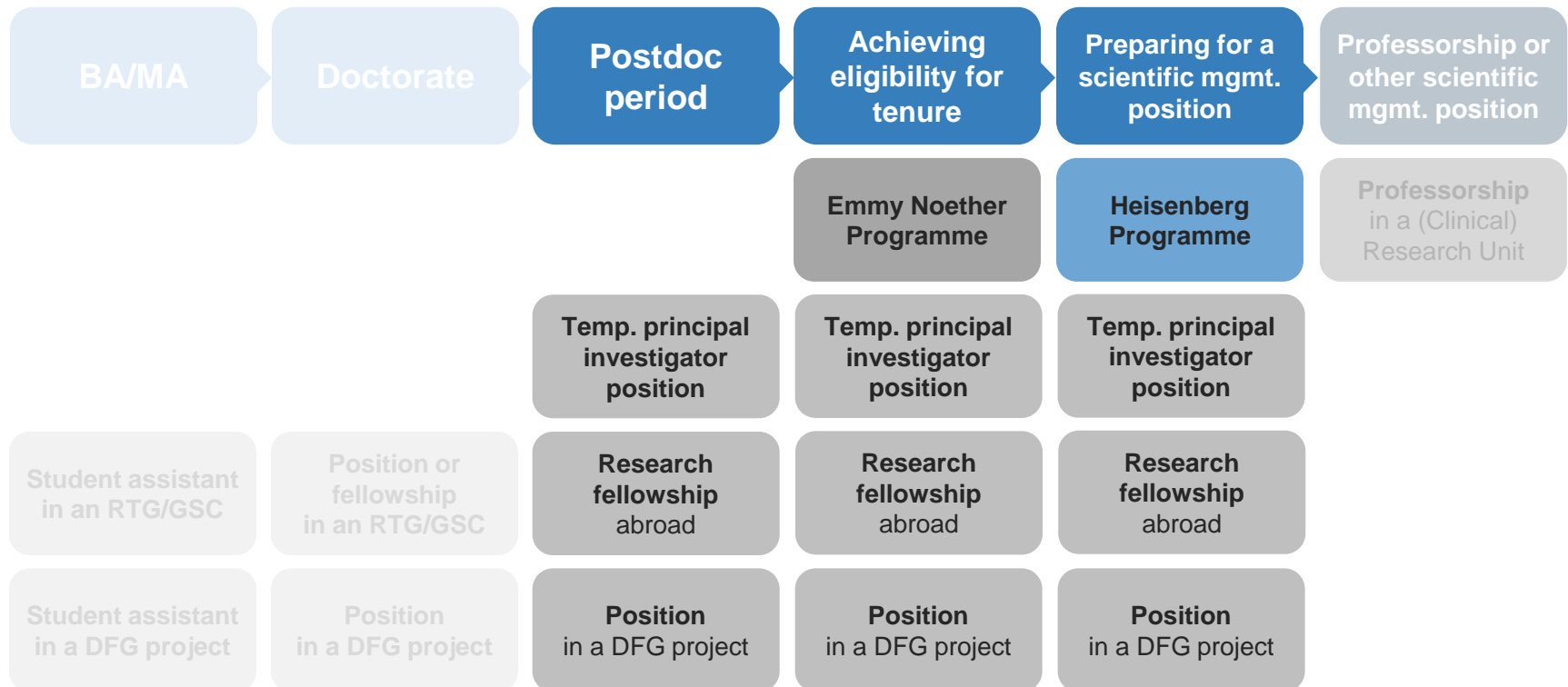
## Emmy Noether annual meeting





# DFG Funding Opportunities

## For early career researchers



# DFG Funding Opportunities

## Heisenberg Programme

- ▶ For researchers eligible for **professorial appointment**
- ▶ **Duration** of max. 5 years
- ▶ Flexible **type of funding** new
  - Fellowship € 4,450
  - Position E-15 TVöD/TV-L new
  - Position for temporary substitutes for clinicians new
  - Professorship W2 or W3 → host university must establish permanent professorship
- ▶ Flexible **research funds**: € 12,000 new
- ▶ Projects in Germany may be combined with research grant proposal
- ▶ **Proposal to the DFG**



# Topics

1 | The DFG – About Us

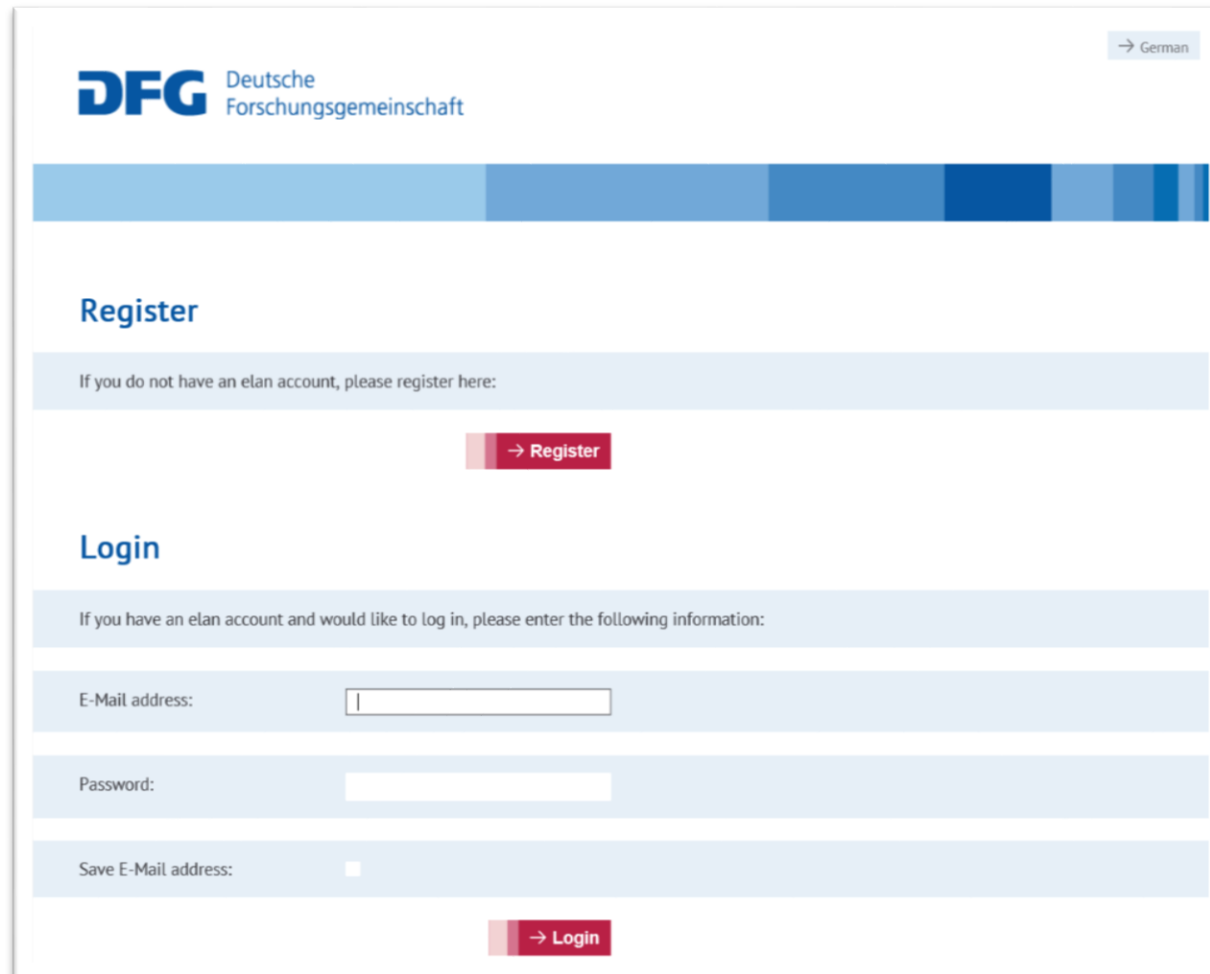
2 | DFG Funding Opportunities

**3 | Proposal and Review Process**

4 | Advice for Applicants

# Proposal and Review Process

## Electronic proposals and reviews via *elan*



The screenshot shows the DFG elan web interface. At the top left is the DFG logo (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft). At the top right is a language selector button labeled '→ German'. Below the header is a decorative blue bar. The main content area has two sections: 'Register' and 'Login'. The 'Register' section includes a light blue box with the text 'If you do not have an elan account, please register here:' and a red button with a white arrow and the text '→ Register'. The 'Login' section includes a light blue box with the text 'If you have an elan account and would like to log in, please enter the following information:'. Below this are three input fields: 'E-Mail address:' with a text input box, 'Password:' with a password input box, and 'Save E-Mail address:' with a checkbox. At the bottom of the login section is a red button with a white arrow and the text '→ Login'.

DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

→ German

### Register

If you do not have an elan account, please register here:

→ Register

### Login

If you have an elan account and would like to log in, please enter the following information:

E-Mail address:

Password:

Save E-Mail address: ☐

→ Login

# Proposal and Review Process

## Preparing Your Proposal

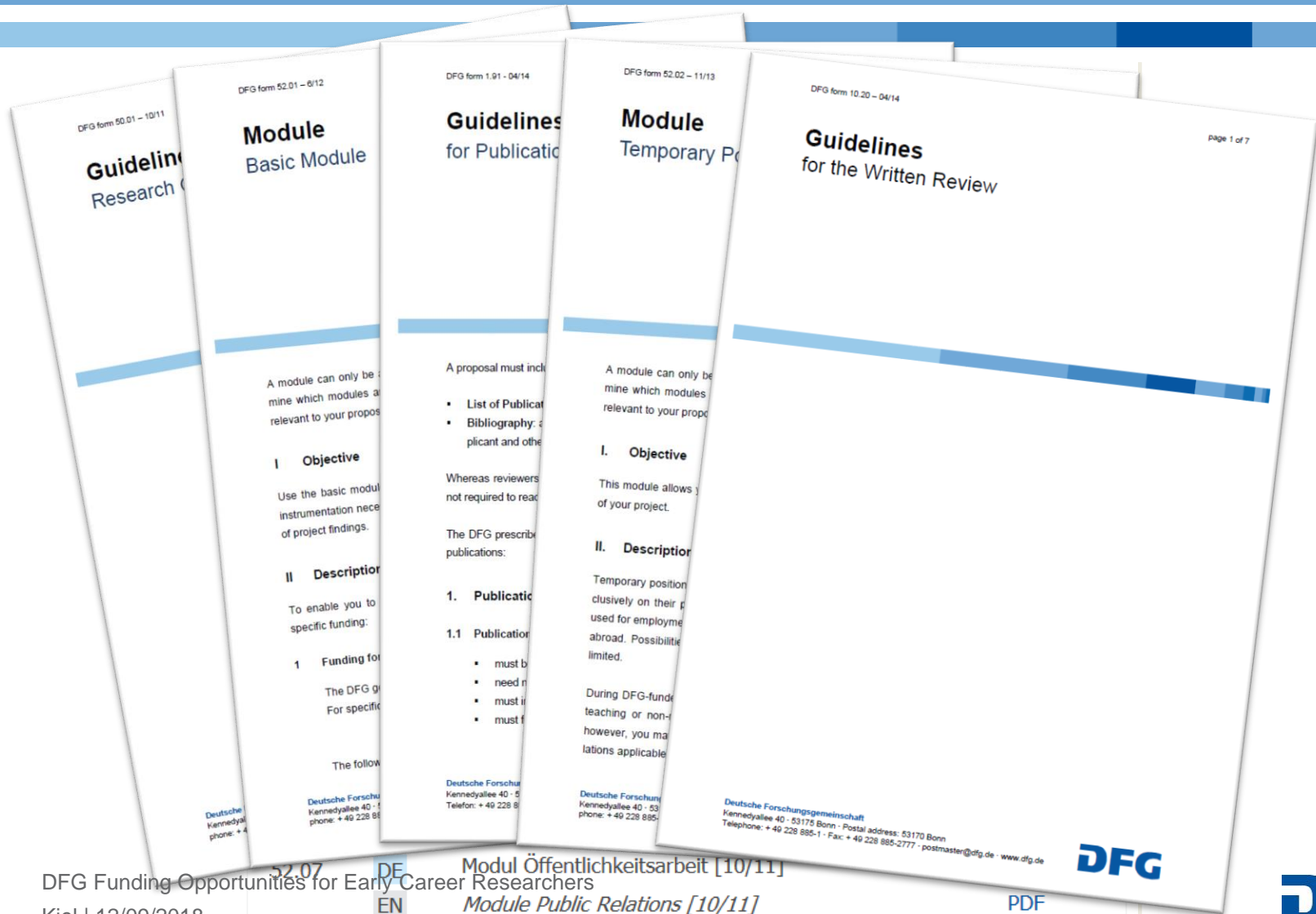
A proposal consists of three parts:

1. **General information** → Applicant data, obligations, rules of good scientific practice
2. **Project description** → Current state of research, preliminary work, objectives, schedule
3. **Appendices** → CV that includes a limited number of publications



# Proposal and Review Process

## Preparing Your Proposal



# Proposal and Review Process

## Preparing Your Proposal

- ▶ Carefully review and follow the guidelines and proposal instructions
  - Relevant information can be found on the DFG website
- ▶ Contact us if you have any questions
- ▶ Put yourself in the reviewers' shoes
- ▶ Seek honest criticism from colleagues
- ▶ Plan a feasible timeline: On average, the time to decision is over six months



# Proposal and Review Process

## Preparing Your Proposal



- ▶ Decide on the proposal language: English or German
- ▶ Inform DFG Head Office in case a conflict of interest or competitive scenario exists
- ▶ Communicate openly with DFG Head Office staff



# Preparing Your Proposal

## Grant budget

- ▶ No upper limits
- ▶ Needs to be realistic and justified by the project
- ▶ Start with smaller projects
- ▶ Supplemental, project-specific needs vs. existing resources at the higher education institution (*Grundausstattung*)
- ▶ Helpful to talk with others or seek advice from other grant applicants, recipients, institutions/organisations
- ▶ Information on staff amounts provided on the DFG website

# Preparing Your Proposal

## Your CV

- ▶ Structure it clearly
- ▶ Include prizes, fellowships and awards
- ▶ Include time away from research (relating to family or illness, dependent care, etc.)
- ▶ List up to 10 of your most important publications



# Proposal and Review Process

## DFG contacts

For questions on **eligibility**:

[verfahren-nachwuchs@dfg.de](mailto:verfahren-nachwuchs@dfg.de)

Phone: +49 (0)228 885-3008

Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays

9:00 a.m. to noon

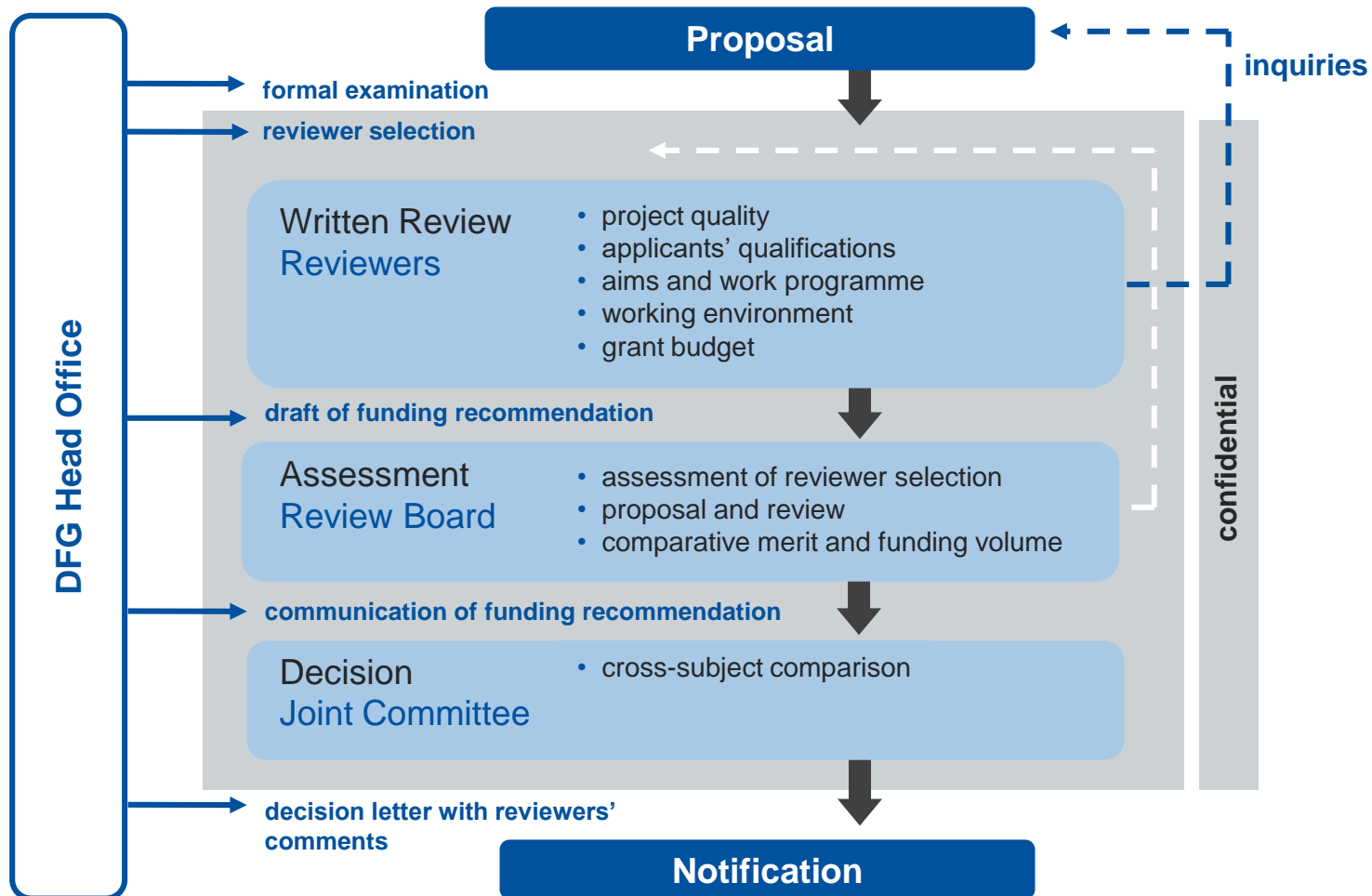
**DFG contacts:**

[www.dfg.de/en/dfg\\_profile/head\\_office](http://www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/head_office)



# Proposal and Review Process

## In the individual grants programme



# Proposal and Review Process

## Review boards (*Fachkollegien*)



# Topics

1 | The DFG – About Us

2 | DFG Funding Opportunities

3 | Proposal and Review Process

**4 | Advice for Applicants**

# Advice for Applicants

## If at first you don't succeed...

- ▶ Don't be discouraged
- ▶ Take reviewer comments seriously but not personally
- ▶ Consult the DFG Head Office if you need advice or feel that you have been treated unfairly
- ▶ Read through reviewer comments carefully – they might give you some pointers for reworking your proposal



# Advice for Applicants

## Research career

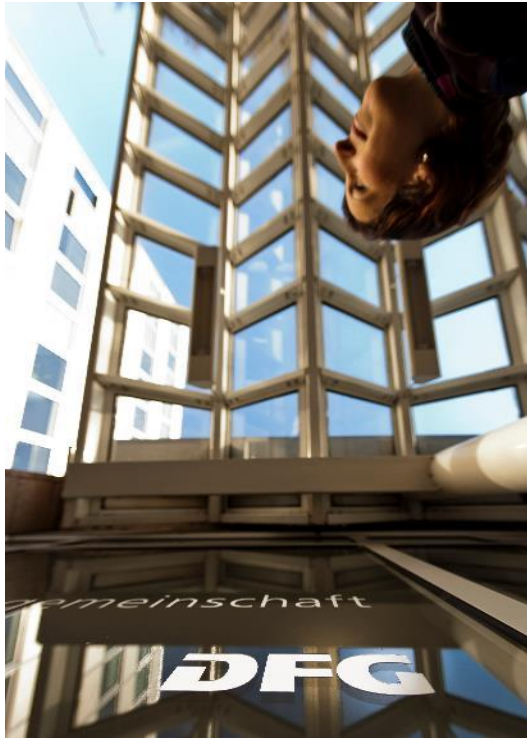
- ▶ Develop your own and independent research profile
- ▶ Publish independently (if possible)
- ▶ Be flexible – find the best environment for your research
- ▶ Build networks of collaboration partners
- ▶ Take advantage of advice and information services





# Links and Resources

## DFG



### For more information

- ▶ Early career grant programmes at a glance:  
[www.dfg.de/research\\_careers](http://www.dfg.de/research_careers)
- ▶ Funding Programmes in detail:  
[www.dfg.de/en/research\\_funding/programmes](http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes)
- ▶ DFG contacts: [www.dfg.de/en/dfg\\_profile/head\\_office](http://www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/head_office)
- ▶ DFG German Project Information System (GEPRIS):  
[gepris.dfg.de/en](http://gepris.dfg.de/en)
- ▶ Research Explorer – The German Research Directory:  
[www.dfg.de/en/rex](http://www.dfg.de/en/rex)
- ▶ General questions: [info-nachwuchs@dfg.de](mailto:info-nachwuchs@dfg.de)

Dr. Astrid Evers  
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[astrid.evers@dfg.de](mailto:astrid.evers@dfg.de)  
+49-228-885-2894

# Thank you for your attention

# Advice for Applicants

## From a reviewer's perspective

- ▶ Is the project important?
- ▶ Is the project idea current and original?
- ▶ Will the project result in significant findings? What new knowledge will be generated – what gaps in current knowledge would be filled?
- ▶ Is the applicant (or team of applicants) suitably qualified to carry out the project successfully?
- ▶ Are the proposed methods up to date and suitable for addressing the research question?
- ▶ Can the work programme be completed within the proposed timeframe?

# Advice for Applicants

## 10 golden rules for submitting a proposal

1. The proposal follows the guidelines and instructions and does not exceed the maximum allowable length.
2. The proposal is clear, precise, well structured and understandable to a non-expert audience.
3. The project idea is original and contributes considerably to our understanding of scientific (and social) questions.
4. The scientific aims are focused on central questions, theses and hypotheses.
5. The descriptions of the current state of research are up to date and relate directly to the project's objectives.

# Advice for Applicants

## 10 golden rules for submitting a proposal

6. The preliminary work and personal track record reflect the qualifications and academic/scientific independence of the applicant.
7. The work programme is clear and follows a realistic timeline.
8. The methods are tailored to address the issues at hand.
9. The proposed budget is consistent with the work programme.
10. Information relevant to the proposal, such as unpublished manuscripts and written agreements with significant cooperation partners, are included.