

Second Call**European Platform for Life Sciences, Mind Sciences,
and the Humanities**

An interdisciplinary network for early career researchers

Second Call**Deadline: February 1, 2010****Further information**

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The “European Platform”

Recent developments in the cognitive neurosciences, particularly the combination of imaging technologies like fMRI or MEG with methods of experimental psychology, have broadened the thematic scope of experimental and theoretical neuroscience research tremendously. As it seems, the neurosciences take over research questions which have been traditionally in the focus of disciplines like philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences – leading to potentially new fields of research like “neurophilosophy”, “neuroeconomics”, or “social neuroscience”. This development has not only been met with great interest and fascination, but has also provoked profound skepticism, as is evidenced in an ongoing and sometimes heated debate about the interpretation of certain experiments and their eventually far-reaching consequences – not only for science, but also for society and the concept of humankind at large.

The “European Platform for Life Sciences, Mind Sciences, and the Humanities” is an interdisciplinary network for early career researchers looking for synergies and new perspectives resulting from interdisciplinary exchange across the related disciplines. The network is meant to overcome the sense of competition and superiority aiming to secure the position of one’s own discipline as the one giving “final answers” – a position which still can be found in actual debates. At the moment, the “European Platform” comprises eight research groups working on different topics. Please, find more information about the groups and the “European Platform” on www.volkswagenstiftung.de.

The Second Call

The Volkswagen Foundation aims to further the development of the “European Platform for Life Sciences, Mind Sciences, and the Humanities” and invites a second group of early career researchers to this network in order to give fresh impetus to this dynamic and exciting field. The initiative is addressed specifically to highly talented young scholars from all related disciplines. Their projects and interests can, but do not have to be related to

one of the eight yet existing groups. Input coming from other related disciplines such as anthropology, the social sciences, medicine or informatics is most welcome. The Volkswagen Foundation intends to grant this selected group of academics the opportunity to break new ground and to support them in creating networks with scholars from other research communities which would not be easily accessible otherwise.

As a first step, a workshop will be organized for a maximum of 40 participants from all-over Europe. The main goal of this workshop will be to identify new key topics related to the ongoing interdisciplinary dispute. Accordingly, the focus will not be on research topics within a given discipline, but on questions at the interface between disciplines, which usually find no place in specialized disciplinary research programs.

Furthermore, the workshop should help to establish several smaller teams, which will have the possibility to apply for funds for a joint working phase on a selected topic of up to two years. During that time period the Volkswagen Foundation will support the activities of these teams as well as the interaction between all scholars. Funding can be granted e. g. for team meetings, retreats including the invitation of leading scientists, "twin"-travel to conferences for at least two scholars with a different scientific background, publications etc. In addition, the Volkswagen Foundation will be open to new ideas and suggestions, including applications for pilot projects resulting from the work of these teams and for obtaining individual interdisciplinary qualifications.

The current network of the "European Platform" will be invited to support the new generation to be established at the outcome of this second call.

Call for Proposals

The Volkswagen Foundation invites applications from European early career researchers of all related disciplines, who wish to attend the workshop and are dedicated to contribute to the development of the platform.

"European Platform for Life Sciences, Mind Sciences, and the Humanities"

Organization: Volkswagen Foundation

Date: May 31 to June 2, 2010

Place: Tutzing, Bavaria, Germany

Target Group: Ph. D. students and postdoctoral fellows

Application: Abstracts are to be submitted before February 1, 2010 to
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The abstract should be written in English and should not be longer than three pages containing:

- Title of contribution
- Name, address of applicant and institution
- CV, list of publications
- Short description of own research focus
- Outline for a proposed project
- Statement about the motivation to participate in this activity

Abstracts have to be submitted both in paper and electronically.

Selection: Applications will undergo a peer review. Acceptance will be based on qualification of the applicant as well as originality and potential of the proposed project.

Funding: Travel expenses and accommodation will be fully reimbursed to the invited participants by the Volkswagen Foundation.