



With a high variety of initiatives, the MPS promotes equal opportunities for women and men. The career-building program “Sign Up!” is a very important part of that strategy. The design is in line with the identified challenges of talents in academia and has been proved in six successful program rounds already. The next program will start in January 2021.

The aim of the program is to promote female post-doctoral researchers and academic staff in their career development and prepare them for leadership roles in the scientific community. It will strengthen them in their career planning with the long-term objective of keeping them in academia and support their professional success. For this extremely important target group, the MPS and the EAF Berlin, an independent Academy for Diversity in Leadership, developed jointly a qualification and networking program with a duration of one year.

What does the program offer?

The program has three focuses:

- personal qualification: training of personal skills,
- professional qualification: providing relevant information on scientific career building,
- networking: establishing contacts on a peer-level and with successful researchers.

The program includes three seminar modules of 3 to 4 days that offer training and information as well as discussion with top scientists - alumnae of the program - to give firsthand insights into opportunities and challenges lying ahead.

The seminar modules will focus on the following areas:

Careers in academia: career paths in academia, success factors, appointment procedures, application strategies, self-marketing,

Leadership & communication in academia: self-management, leadership roles, professional communication models,

Scientific community: research funding and institutions, political developments and strategic issues.

Who can participate?

Up to 18 post-doctoral researchers can be selected for the program. Candidates should

- have high academic potential
- have proven scientific record
- be particularly ambitious and
- be motivated to ascend towards leadership positions in academia.

How is the selection process structured?

The institute directors of the Max Planck Society must nominate candidates. The post docs will be asked to write a short statement about their scientific biography and their motivation. A selection committee will decide for the final program participants.

The organizational framework of the program

The seminars take place in different seminar buildings in Germany. The language of the program is English.

- The program costs are covered by the general administration of the MPS.
- The institutes of the participants cover the specific costs, such as travel expenses, accommodation and most of the catering costs.
- For participants selected for the program, the participation in all three modules is mandatory.

The program is conducted in cooperation with the EAF Berlin. The independent academy provides advisory service for institutions in a change process towards more diversity in leadership. As a non-profit organization the EAF Berlin works with organizations in business, government and academia. The academy conducts innovative programs and trainings for personnel and organization development and practices oriented research projects. Prof. Dr. Barbara Schaeffer-Hegel and Dr. Helga Lukoschat founded the EAF Berlin in 1996 as a spin-off from the Technical University in Berlin. Jointly with the Technical University Berlin and in cooperation with considerable technology companies, leading research institutions and technical universities, the EAF Berlin founded the Femtec in 2001, an international career platform for female scientists. The MPS has partnered with the EAF for several years as part of a corporate partnership.

Contact for program information and application

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