



Call for proposals for postdoctoral research funding (Call No. 4)

Research funds of the German Sport University Cologne (GSU)

Aim of the grant

Call No. 4 is part of the research funding schemes of the German Sport University (GSU) for young scientist. The aim of this call is to support young scientists in their postdoctoral period. They should be given the possibility to build and extend their research profile, to expand their scientific independence and to initiate international cooperations. To this end, GSU promotes innovative research that is of basic and/or applied importance for sport science. The research project should show a long-term research perspective and contribute to the further development of the academic career. This can be a single project or building blocks of a research concept. The aim is to publish the results of the project in a journal (see required output).

Financial modalities

Individual applications of **up to 20.000 €** will be considered. A grant from the internal research funding of GSU may be used as the only source of funding or in addition to other fundings. In the latter case the declaration of other fundings is mandatory. The grant can be spent on travel¹ and equipment expenses or personnel costs (SHK/WHF/WHK/WMA, expansion of own position²). In addition, funding can be applied for for the modules [internationalisation](#) (3,000 €) and [open access](#) (2,000 €). Internal interdisciplinary collaboration with researchers from other GSU institutes (not departments) is possible as part of a joint grant application (increase in amount of funding by 500 euros).

If the project requires equipment or instruments that are already available at the GSU in other institutes, a compensation payment may be made if these are made available for the HIFF project to offset any additional costs and resource commitments resulting from wear and tear, training in their use, repair costs, etc. The compensatory payment, up to a maximum of 2,000 euros, is paid to the lending institute or department in accordance with the [established regulations](#).

Projects or the funds requested for this purpose will be approved for a period of twelve months. Approval will be made if the university budget allows its implementation and if the university has enough resources in the year of approval.

To apply for these funds, please use the application form provided for this purpose.

Application process

Postdocs of the GSU who are employed at GSU for the entire duration of the project are eligible to apply. Proposals together with other postdocs may also be submitted (group applications). Each person can only hand in one proposal. A parallel proposal for call no. 3 is not possible. Persons who, at the

¹ Please note that call no. 4 is project funding and not a travel grant. Therefore, applications that only provide for the financing of conference costs and the associated travel expenses cannot be accepted. Up to €1,500 can be applied for to cover conference costs (including the associated travel expenses).

² When applying, please note that the employment is within the framework of academic qualifications according to the Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (German Act on Academic Temporary Contracts) and that your individual creditable employment periods still have sufficient capacity. Please also note that employment positions are automatically associated with teaching obligations.

time of grant acceptance, are managing another HIFF project that has not yet been completed, are not eligible to apply.

The application form must be used to submit the proposal.

Information on the use of artificial intelligence in the form of generative models for text and image creation in the application:

The use of generative models is permitted, but must be disclosed and cited in a scientifically appropriate manner. The use must be in line with good scientific practice and applicants should disclose whether and to what extent they have used generative models for their research and in the context of the application. The responsibility for maintaining scientific integrity remains with the researchers themselves. In addition, legal aspects, such as copyright, must be taken into account when using generative AI in the context of an application. Generative AI should be seen as an aid and not as a substitute for the researcher's own scientific expertise. The final responsibility for the content and quality of the application lies with the applicant.

Proposals can be written in German or English.

Please note: If the formal requirements of the application form (page numbers, missing signatures, missing documents, budget overruns etc.) are not met, the application will not be accepted.

Complete application documents should be handed in electronically (via e-mail, max. 8 MB) as **one pdf** document to the Department of Research and Scientific Qualification to the following email address: forschung-dshs@dshs-koeln.de. Please state in the email subject line the call number (Call 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) in which you apply (e.g. Call 4 for this funding line).

For questions please contact Dr. Birte Ahrens (b.ahrens@dshs-koeln.de , -8737).

Review process and approval

All applications are reviewed as part of a review process. The University Commission for Research and Transfer makes the final decision on funding on the basis of the written reviews and the funding priorities of the call. The following criteria are taken into account in the review process:

- Relevance of the topic
- Quality and feasibility of the work programme
- Appropriateness of methods and models
- Consideration of gender and diversity dimensions in the application
- Realistic time and cost schedule
- Individual-related aspects (e.g. previous research achievements, career opportunities)

Approvals are estimated to be given in December 2026.

**Required output**

The results of the project must be published as manuscripts in one of the following categories:

- Original articles in an internationally accepted journal, i.e. the journal is part of the SCImago journal rank (SJR) list or
- Original articles in an edited book (no book of abstracts of a congress) or
- a theory-based textbook with applied focus.

The manuscript must be submitted by the end of the funding period.

- In the course of the proof of submission, you will receive a link to a questionnaire on the framework conditions of the funding and the implementation of the project. Participation in this survey (approx. 10 minutes) is obligatory.
- The project must be maintained and published in FIS.

Deadline is October 4th 2026.