

Call for Applications

Inclusive Postdoctoral Support Grant

CECAD – Cluster of Excellence for Aging Research, University of Cologne

1. Purpose and Eligibility

The Inclusive Postdoctoral Support Grant provides **flexible financial support** to postdoctoral researchers at CECAD whose academic trajectories have been affected by **structural marginalization**.

The grant aims to strengthen **research development, career progression, and scientific independence**, particularly where structural barriers have limited access to resources or opportunities.

Eligibility

This program is **exclusively open to CECAD postdoctoral researchers who identify as belonging to a marginalized group** and whose academic trajectory has been affected by structural barriers.

Marginalization may relate, for example, to:

- First-generation academic background
- Chronic illness or disability
- neurodivergence
- Refugee or displacement experience
- Structural discrimination (e.g., BIPOC, LGBTQIA+)
- Other systemic barriers

Eligibility is based on **self-identification**. The program follows an inclusive approach and does not rely on fixed categories.

2. Application Documents

Applications must include:

(1) Research and Career Development Concept (2–3 pages)

The central document of the application. It should include:

- Research idea and objectives
- Current status and feasibility

- Planned activities during the funding period of the grant
- Expected outcomes and career perspective

Including: Use of the Grant (required):

Clearly describe how the requested funding will be used and how it will:

- advance your research project and/or
- support your career development

You may refer to your personal situation **if this helps explain the relevance, added value, or necessity of the requested support**, but this is **not required**.

(2) CV (max. 3 pages)

Including up to **10 selected publications**

(3) Confidential Eligibility Statement (*please use provided DFG form „Information relating to special personal circumstances“*)

A brief statement describing the **structural barriers or marginalization / special personal circumstances** relevant to your eligibility.

- Required to confirm eligibility
- **Level of detail is at your discretion**
- Focus on relevance for your academic trajectory
- The committee may request clarification if needed

3. Evaluation Procedure

The selection process follows a **two-stage procedure** to ensure confidentiality and fairness:

Stage 1 – Eligibility Check (Confidential)

- Conducted by **two designated committee members**
- Based on the full application, including the confidential statement
- Determines **eligibility only** (non-competitive)

Stage 2 – Scientific Evaluation

- Conducted by the **full selection committee**
- Based **exclusively on scientific documents** (concept + CV)
- The confidential statement is **not shared**

Selection is based on:

- Scientific quality and feasibility

- Career development potential
 - Clarity and appropriateness of the proposed use of funds
 - Expected impact of the grant
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4. Funding

- Up to €4,000 per grant

Flexible use, e.g.:

- Research activities (pilot data, materials)
 - Conferences and networking
 - Training and career development
 - Targeted support to mitigate structural barriers
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5. Submission and Deadline



Application deadline: 1 October 2026

Submission

Applications must be submitted by email at julia.zielinski@uk-koeln.de.

Please submit **two PDF documents**:

1. **Scientific Application (PDF 1)**
 - Research and Career Development Concept (including planned use of the grant)
 - CV
2. **Confidential Eligibility Statement „Information relating to special personal circumstances“ (PDF 2)**
 - Separate document, word template provided
 - Contains the statement on marginalization/structural barriers
 - Treated as strictly confidential

The separation into two documents is **mandatory** to ensure the two-stage evaluation process. Please name your two documents: **Your Name_Scientific Application** and **Your Name_Confidential Eligibility Statement**
