

Annex 2

Information Sheet for Universities and Non-University Research Institutes

Junior Research Groups at BIBB

The Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) is a departmental research institution of the German Federal Government and serves as a national and international center of excellence in vocational education and training (VET). It plays a key role in the continuous development of the German VET system. BIBB is firmly committed to the principle of science-policy-practice communication, ensuring that research findings systematically inform policymaking and professional practice. Research is legally mandated as a core responsibility of BIBB under the Vocational Training Act (BBiG). VET Research constitutes the evidence base for policy advice and practice-oriented development. It is inherently interdisciplinary and requires substantial thematic breadth and methodological diversity.

In 2019, BIBB launched the *Graduate Program in Vocational Education and Training Research*. The program aims to qualify early-career researchers for academic and research careers both within and beyond departmental research institutions. A central component of this program is the implementation and funding of Junior Research Groups.

Universities and Non-University Research Institutes as Strategic Partners

BIBB maintains extensive national and international collaborations with universities and non-university research institutes. Within the framework of early-career researcher development, these partnerships play a strategically important role.

Junior Research Groups are institutionally based at BIBB and collaborate closely with a partner university or non-university research institute. The cooperation is designed to ensure that the Junior Research Group benefits from the complementary strengths of both institutions, for example, BIBB's strong policy and practice orientation and the university's expertise in academic qualification and teaching. At the partner institute, the Junior Research Group Leader is expected to gain teaching experience (typically two hours per week per semester) and to further develop the formal qualifications required for obtaining a professorship. BIBB explicitly and strongly encourages the joint appointment of selected Junior Research Group Leaders as Junior Professors in cooperation with the partner university—ideally following the so-called *Thuringian Model* of joint appointment. The specific terms of collaboration between BIBB and the partner university will be governed by a formal cooperation agreement.

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