



2026 Call for Nominations for Max Planck Partner Groups worldwide (excluding Belarus and Russia) for Postdocs / Junior Faculty

DEADLINE: 1 OCTOBER 2026

The Max Planck Partner Group Program has evolved into much more than a funding instrument. Today, it is one of MPG's most effective strategic tools for building and maintaining long-term international scientific partnerships. Partner Groups enable Max Planck Institutes (MPIs) to stay connected with outstanding former MPI researchers who often become leading scientists in their respective fields and regions.

Since 2021, the program has been open to nominations from all countries worldwide. Scientific excellence remains the sole selection criterion.

Scientific Members are encouraged to make full use of the program's global scope when considering nominations, including candidates from strategically important regions such as Europe, North America and Latin America.

General

Max Planck Partner Groups are led by outstanding early career researchers of MPI who have moved or are about to move to a respective research institution or university ideally in their home country. Max Planck Partner Groups enable collaboration in research areas that are innovative, scientifically promising, geared to the future and of mutual interest both to the MPI and to the partner institution in the host country to which they are relocating. A Partner Group is set up for a duration of five years and provides a high-level and visible framework to the Partner Group Leader, aiming at strengthening collaboration, building up a research group as well as international networking.

Heading a Max Planck Partner Group is a distinction. The President of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft formally appoints candidates upon recommendation/nomination by one of its Scientific Members (i.e. Director of MPI).

Qualification and Nomination

Nominations for Max Planck Partner Groups may only be submitted by Directors of MPIs and are addressed to the President of the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (MPG). Candidates should be outstanding early-career researchers at the postdoctoral or junior faculty level who have spent at least 6–12 months at a MPI. At the time of nomination, candidates should have obtained their doctoral degree no more than seven years earlier (or no more than nine years earlier in the case of a medical doctorate).

Candidates who are not yet working at a research institution/ university in their prospective host country at the time of nomination are expected to acquire such a position within 6 months of the official approval of the Partner Group.



Please note: Only Scientific Members are eligible to nominate candidates. Interested candidates cannot apply directly but must first discuss a potential nomination with their former host director who will decide whether to support and submit the nomination. The Scientific Members who host the Max Planck Partner Group should hold their position at the time of nomination and be expected to remain in office for the following five years to provide the continuity necessary for establishing a sustainable, long-term scientific collaboration between the MPI and the Partner Group.

Funding and contractual arrangements

Partner Groups are governed by a bilateral agreement between the MPI and the host institution abroad. Partner Groups are funded with an amount of €20.000 p.a. plus any applicable value added tax (VAT) accrued in Germany from the MPG central budget¹. Funds can be used to cover e.g. the costs for travel expenses, workshops, PhD students and postdocs, as well as smaller equipment. Possible overhead costs incurred by the host institution cannot be covered.

Please use the cover page for your nomination and submit the corresponding nomination documents (items 1–9) no later than 1 October 2026.

¹ If the €20k or part of the €20k are transferred abroad, they become subject to value added tax in Germany. VAT is paid by the MPI to the tax office.