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Dear Readers,

Supporting early career researchers’ potential for various career paths in view of the complex societal challenges of our time is a central concern at Kiel University. With the new KITE initiative – “Kiel Training for Excellence” the University’s Postdoc Center offers a new career development programme for postdoctoral researchers interested in exploring their career prospects in different academic and non-academic settings.

The University Board is proud to have succeeded in bringing this flagship initiative to Kiel University and we are pleased to support the programme strategically and financially. KITE will set new standards for postdoctoral career development at Kiel University and lead to lasting and sustainable change. Developing talents, advancing excellent research - that is the motto of this interdisciplinary and cross-institutional qualification programme. To this end, we invite researchers from all over the world to the Kiel Fjord to join us by immersing themselves in one of our four truly interdisciplinary priority research areas: Kiel Life Science (KLS); Kiel Marine Science (KMS); Kiel Nano, Surface and Interface Science (KiNSIS); Societal, Environmental and Cultural Change (SECC).

KITE perfectly complements our other European initiatives, the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) award for excellent recruitment and working conditions for researchers, and Kiel University’s membership in the European University Alliance SEA-EU. These offer unique opportunities for synergies for the KITE postdocs, be it by providing an excellent working environment or enhanced networking opportunities at the European level.

We are convinced that KITE will boost internationalisation at Kiel University and look forward to enriching our unique interdisciplinary environment with the KITE postdocs and their innovative research ideas. In turn, we are committed to enabling the KITE postdocs to make informed decisions about their future career paths by providing them with advanced training opportunities and insights into the current activities of a wide range of associated partners from academia, industry, politics and society. We thank all our partners for their generous support and willingness to dedicate their expertise and time. Together we can make this innovative programme succeed!

Professor Simone Fulda
President of Kiel University
City, beach, ships: Kiel.Sailing.City. – This is Germany’s only major city on the sea: dynamic, livable, modern and with its very unique maritime lifestyle. The huge ferries, cruise liners from all around the world, shopping malls, Baltic beaches and a diverse culture scene fuse to a harmonic whole. Every year 250,000 inhabitants, 20 million day visitors, 3.1 million overnight guests, 1.6 million ferry passengers and 514,000 cruise liners guests get to experience their Kiel moments in the city, on the beach or on board.

Discover Kiel: Dive right into the exciting mix of adventure and relaxation, culture and nightlife, sports and shopping. Discover more than 15 museums, shop and browse small boutique stores or the modern shopping malls and be amazed by world class sports on and off the water. Find your very personal Kiel moment at one of the many events right in the city.

Enjoy the sea: Water as far as the eye can see! Enjoy the beach view, relax in one of the comfortable traditional beach chairs or dive right into the salty Baltic Sea. Enjoy one of the many different water sports. Kiel’s fjord is the perfect area for sailing, wind surfing, kiting or SUP. It’s easy to forget about everyday life thanks to the fine sand, the long coastal promenades and the magnificent landscape. This can be enjoyed by both young and old alike. Amidst picturesque dunes and wide, shallow waters you can sunbathe, go for walks, play and of course make sand castles.

Big ships, small sailing boats: International sailing regattas, cruise liners from all around the globe and thousands of hobby sailors can be seen on Kiel’s fjord – truly making it Kiel.Sailing.City! If on one of the smaller ferries or on a big cruise liner – in Kiel you always travel with enough water beneath the keel! Kiel’s marinas offer space for more than 4,000 boats, from small dinghies to big yachts.

Kiel Week (Kieler Woche): This is the world’s greatest and biggest sailing event. On 9 days with more than 3.5 million visitors and over 2,000 individual sailing events you will also enjoy Northern Europe’s biggest summer fest. Dive right into a program packed with sailing events, live music, international food specials, adventure parks for kids and much, much more! Visitors get the chance to experience Kiel Week’s fascinating atmosphere live from the first row by accompanying a regatta, for example, on a sailing boat a motor ship or a steamboat.

By Kiel Marketing e.V.
Kiel University is a mid-sized and research-intensive university offering the full spectrum of academic disciplines, which at the same time has pursued a path of internal differentiation.

Kiel University (also referred to as the CAU) uses research, teaching and the transfer of science to address the great challenges of our time in health, environmental and cultural change, nutrition and energy. In doing so, it ensures peace and preserves livelihoods for future generations. Kiel University uses responsible actions to make sure that scientific discoveries are transferred into all sectors of our society by interdisciplinary thought - regardless of short-lived trends - where they are incorporated into political, economic and social decisions aimed at securing peace and prosperity.

When it was founded back in 1665, Kiel University set itself the motto “Pax Optima Rerum: Peace is the most valuable asset.” This maxim is as applicable today as it was over 350 years ago. The university wants to follow this key idea and contribute towards creating a peaceful, fair world in which everyone lives freely and comfortably. A world in which treating the environment with respect also enables future generations to enjoy the same benefits.

Kiel University's mission is:
Research and teaching that contributes towards peace, prosperity and maintaining a pluralistic, free society, and which addresses the challenges we are facing. They are based on strong disciplines. They require interdisciplinary collaboration. And they deal with transdisciplinary issues. We find solutions to today’s pressing problems and implement these together with stakeholders from society, industry and politics.

Kiel University is dedicated to research-based teaching and learning. Therefore, the development of new teaching approaches is evolving constantly at the interfaces between research from the different scientific disciplines. Students from all over the world benefit from this: Research results are quickly integrated into programme curricula and our academic staff is trained in-state-of-the-art teaching methods.

Kiel University is embedded in an international network of scientific, cultural, political and economic contacts and partnerships. This way, the university became a vibrant member of the scientific community and the society, which provide important impulses for Kiel University’s productive development in return.
PRIORITY RESEARCH AREAS OF KIEL UNIVERSITY

As Schleswig-Holstein’s only fully-fledged university with 27,000 students and more than 2,000 researchers, Kiel University offers a cross-disciplinary academic environment. The disciplines offered by its eight faculties are connected by constant dynamic interfaces that are reflected in the university’s teaching and integrative research profile.

In 2008, four priority research areas were established, based on intensive collaboration:

- **Kiel Life Science (KLS)**
- **Kiel Marine Science (KMS)**
- **Kiel Nano, Surface and Interface Science (KiNSIS)** as well as
- **Societal, Environmental and Cultural Change (SECC)**.

Each research area combines the expertise from various faculties – from natural sciences, social sciences, engineering, law and humanities. Today, the priority research areas are firmly embedded in the university’s structures. They complement the wide range of individual research in the various subjects, and form the basis for the Clusters of Excellence “ROOTS – Societal, Environmental and Cultural Connectivity in Past Societies” and “Precision Medicine in Chronic Inflammation (PMI)”.

In parallel to this, shared research infrastructures evolved, such as a cleanroom, a lab for analysing ancient DNA, a platform for molecular in-vivo imaging or Europe’s largest scientific Next-Generation-Sequencing-Platform. A shared Computing Centre provides high-performance computer systems and storage services, and develops sophisticated strategies for managing research data. All four priority research areas are interconnected, and maintain strong ties with the eight faculties at Kiel University.

KIEL LIFE SCIENCE

The Interdisciplinary Centre for Applied Life Sciences – Kiel Life Science (KLS) – links up research from the fields of agricultural and nutritional sciences, the natural sciences and medicine at Kiel University. It is aimed at achieving a better understanding of the cellular and molecular processes with which organisms respond to environmental influences. This covers a very broad spectrum: How agricultural crop plants adapt to specific growth conditions, or how, in the interaction of genes, individual lifestyle and environmental factors, diseases can arise. Within this framework, health is always viewed holistically in the evolutionary context.

Taking environmental influences into consideration opens up new perspectives for the transition between health and disease. The KLS community wants to understand physiologically healthy and pathological processes of organisms in an overall context, and to identify new options for prevention and therapy. In the long term, this should help us to achieve measurable progress in healthcare provision.

Currently KLS comprises roughly 130 scientific members and 48 departments from all six faculties at Kiel University. Together they bundle the expertise from the disciplines of bioinformatics, environmental genetics, agricultural sciences, evolutionary biology and genetic research, plant breeding and animal husbandry, food sciences and evolutionary medicine. The participating research groups are well networked beyond the boundaries of the disciplines and institutes. KLS can take full advantage of the excellent technological infrastructure built up in recent years. The research spectrum ranges from large-scale genetic research (“Big Data”) and proteomics, right up to research into phenotype systems.

In total, KLS comprises over 30 externally funded collaborative research projects, centres, networks and the **Cluster of Excellence “Precision Medicine in Chronic Inflammation” (PMI)**, where scientists from various medical disciplines and fundamental research are working together on

Sources: www.kls.uni-kiel.de, www.precisionmedicine.de
an interdisciplinary basis to significantly improve the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of chronic inflammatory diseases. They want to establish a precision medicine in chronic inflammation, which takes the individuality of a person and her or his environment into account. Clinical studies and translation are at the core of this work: Fundamental research results should be transferred as quickly as possible from bench to bedside. The vision is to achieve complete control over the diseases – at every stage and as early as possible. The Cluster PMI is being funded from 2019 to 2025 through the German Excellence Strategy (ExStr). Around 400 members from eight institutions at five different locations in Schleswig-Holstein are involved.

**Integrative topics:**
- Metaorganisms
- Host-Microbe Interaction
- Evolution
- Immunology
- Metabolomics
- Health

**KIEL MARINE SCIENCE**

KMS is the Center for Interdisciplinary Marine Science at Kiel University. KMS is the organizational unit of in total 70 research groups (led by KMS members) at seven faculties and 18 institutes.

KMS marine scientists cover expertise from areas such as climate and coastal research, physical chemistry, botany, microbiology, mathematics and computer science, economics as well as law, ethics and social sciences. The complexity of the ocean within the earth system requires a broad and highly interdisciplinary research orientation. KMS marine scientists contribute to a better understanding of the ocean, and thus to the development of strategies for sustainable use of the ocean system. KMS further initiates and supports major projects in marine research, which mainly cover topics of five research areas: Coast, Governance, Blue Bioeconomy, Digital Ocean, Biological Marine Systems.

Further Kiel Marine Science recently established the Center for Ocean and Society (CeOS) as a cross-faculty platform for integrated marine research on political and socio-economic decision-making and governance. The Center for Ocean and Society will draw together expertise on the oceans from a truly interdisciplinary approach to solution-oriented research. This requires not only a comprehensive understanding of human-ocean interactions but also the development of transdisciplinary collaboration with representatives from various stakeholder groups. The Center for Ocean and Society will also serve as a hub for scientists and stakeholders to assess and synthesize scientific results and to develop practical solutions for the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.

**Integrative topics:**
- Coast
- Governance
- Blue Economy
- Digital Ocean
- Biological Marine Sciences

Source: www.kiel-marine-science.de
KiNSIS was officially established in 2014 as one of the four priority research areas of Kiel University, based on long-term collaborations between scientists from different disciplines. The members of KiNSIS aim for a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles of nanoscale systems, the investigation of their interactions with their environment and the transfer of knowledge into applications. In this way, KiNSIS contributes to solutions for global challenges in the fields of energy, medicine and future information technology.

The KiNSIS network connects researchers across disciplines, institutions, and career levels. It bundles the research infrastructure and methodological diversity of more than 130 professors, research group leaders and postdoctoral researchers from different faculties of Kiel University and a variety of external partner institutions working across the disciplines of Physics, Chemistry, Engineering and Life Sciences. This open and active research ecosystem stimulates excellent science and empowers collaboration across the disciplines.

KiNSIS fosters collaborative research initiatives on the scientific and administrative level. It enables access to research infrastructure and promotes activities in technology transfer and scientific outreach. Early career researchers are supported with grants, awards and events for exchange. Elected representatives of the postdoctoral researchers are part of the KiNSIS Board.

**Integrative topics:**
- Neuroelectronics
- Sensors in Medicine and Technology
- Energy Systems
- Nanomedicine
- Reactions at Interfaces
- Quantum Technology

**Main Research Infrastructure:**
- Center for Networked Sensor Systems (ZEVS)
- Center for Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM-Center)
- Kiel Nanolab, Competence Center Nanosystem Technology
- Laboratory for Reliable Battery-Assisted Energy Conversion (BAEW Lab)
- Molecular Imaging North Competence Center (MOIN CC)
- Ruprecht Haensel Laboratory (RHL, CAU-DESY joint lab)

Source: [www.kinsis.uni-kiel.de/en](http://www.kinsis.uni-kiel.de/en)
SECC and its central institution, the Johanna Mestorf Academy (JMA), focus on the crucial question of humanity’s role in the global system.

Experts from six faculties and numerous institutes of Kiel University have joined forces in a collaborative and interdisciplinary research initiative to investigate the interdependencies and relationships between society, culture, and the environment in the past. They strive to identify the drivers and consequences of change processes in order to assess their relevance for the management of today’s crises. To this end, SECC integrates expertise from prehistory and early history, classical archaeology, the historical disciplines, philosophy, environmental and climate research and the life sciences into a common research agenda.

SECC addresses key questions of today’s societies from a historical perspective:
- What kept past societies together?
- How did our ancestors react to crises?
- How did social inequality develop?
- What world views (Weltanschauungen) shaped past societies?
- How did interdependencies between humans, the environment, and societies develop?

At the core of both the JMA and SECC are two major research networks: The Cluster of Excellence ROOTS – Social, Environmental, and Cultural Connectivity in Past Societies and the Collaborative Research Center (CRC) 1266 – Scales of Transformation: Human Environmental Interaction in Prehistoric and Archaic Societies.

Integrative topics:
- Social & Economic Archaeology
- Past Global Changes
- Dual Evolution
- Niche Construction
- Socio-Environmental Hazards
The KITE – Kiel training for Excellence programme is hosted and managed by the Postdoc Center of Kiel University. The Postdoc Center was founded in 2018 and is a central institution of Kiel University under the responsibility of the Presidential Board. It is the central point of contact for all postdoctoral researchers who are working at the University in a phase of advanced qualification and increasing academic independence. This includes researchers directly following their doctorate but also experienced postdoctoral researchers who are, for example, working on third-party funded research projects, pursuing a habilitation or leading an independent young investigator group.

As a cross-faculty institution at the interface between its target group, university services and university leadership, the Center bundles offers for career advancement at Kiel University and beyond. Kiel University is committed to offer postdoctoral researchers a thriving environment and good working conditions. A comprehensive network of university institutions exists to support researchers in advancing their careers.

The dedicated staff of the Postdoc Center engages to individually support and promote postdoctoral researchers for career paths inside academia or in the private and public sectors. In addition to networking opportunities and information, here they will find advice and support that is individually tailored to them and their career path. With this offer, Kiel University would like to accompany postdoctoral researchers on their various career paths in the best way possible.
WHAT IS KITE?

KITE – Kiel Training for Excellence is funded by the COFUND Programme of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and Kiel University. It is an innovative open-topic career development programme for excellent postdoctoral researchers who seek an INTERNATIONAL, INTERDISCIPLINARY AND INTERSECTORAL (the triple i principle of MSCA) experience to further develop their career prospects taking advantage of the unique environment they find at Kiel University and in the wider Kiel region. The programme is a flagship initiative of Kiel University in the area of promoting and developing the careers of postdoctoral researchers. Being implemented by the Postdoc Center of Kiel University and supported by a consortium of currently 15 academic and non-academic partner organisations, involved in recruitment, hosting and training opportunities for KITE fellows, KITE is a central hub for postdoctoral qualification.

KEY INFORMATION

Project data
HORIZON-MSCA-2021-COFUND-01, 101081480 – KITE

Funding
KITE is cofunded by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) from the European Union Horizon Europe programme and Kiel University

Project duration
01.01.2023 – 31.12.2027

First call for proposals
2023

Second call for proposals
31.01.2024 – 31.03.2024

Postdoc positions
16, 4 per PRA

MISSION

In line with the MSCA triple i KITE aims at attracting talents from all over the world and fostering internationalization in science. The programme promotes independence and interdisciplinarity in research and supports intersectoral career-building to pave the way for leadership positions in Europe both inside and outside of academia.

Until 2027, 16 KITE fellows in two cohorts will be awarded a three-year full-time employment contract.

To advance their own research agenda, they will be integrated into one of the four interdisciplinary priority research areas (PRAs) of Kiel University

- Kiel Life Science (KLS)
- Kiel Marine Science (KMS)
- Kiel Nano, Surface and Interface Science (KiNSIS) and
- Societal, Environmental and Cultural Change (SECC)

The programme is committed to respect and implement the latest relevant standards and guidelines during the recruitment, training, supervision and assessment of the fellows. This includes

- Recruitment standards, including Charter & Code and aspects of gender equality and diversity
  https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/code
- Supervision standards, including the new MSCA Guidelines on Supervision
- Ethical standards, including Responsible Research and Innovation and the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity
  https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/documents/downloadPublic?documentIds=080166e5bf5c08aa8&appId=PPSMS
- Open Science standards, including open access and FAIR data management and IPR policies and
- Environmental standards, including the MSCA Green Charter

Considering these guiding principles will embed KITE fellows in a supportive environment where supervision, feedback culture and interculturality provide them with an optimal basis for career advancement and wellbeing at Kiel University. The comprehensive career development programme will set new standards for and thus transform postdoc training at Kiel University, and as a best-practice example enrich the European Research Area.
WHAT WE OFFER

All fellows will be offered an employment contract at Kiel University for 36 months. During this time, KITE fellows will independently carry out their own research project linked to research conducted in the working group of their mentor and embedded in one of the four interdisciplinary priority research areas of Kiel University. We offer

- competitive working conditions with three years of full employment at Kiel University (current MSCA rates for experienced researchers including generous social security coverage) plus allowances for research, family and mobility
- gender equality, diversity and Open Science are cross-cutting issues in all elements of the programme
- innovative recruitment and mentorship
- transferable skills training
- secondments to partners in the international academic and non-academic sectors.

All fellows will be awarded the University’s standard MSCA employment contract (36 months) for postdoctoral researchers, used by most German research organisations (see Table 1). This includes full social security coverage and flexible working conditions enjoyed by public sector employees in Germany.

Table 1  Amounts provided to KITE fellows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Sum in €*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual salary</td>
<td>67,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual salary for fellows with family</td>
<td>75,000</td>
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</table>

*KITE fellows’ gross salary amounts to the budgetary burden deducted by the employer’s social insurance share of approx. 29%. From the monthly gross salary, the employee’s social security contributions and income tax will be deducted amounting to the fellow’s net salary. The specific net salary depends on the fellow’s individual circumstances and will be calculated by the payroll office when the first salary will be paid.

The net salary includes full social security benefits composed of sickness, parental, unemployment and invalidity benefits, pension rights, benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases. Moreover, all employees are automatically enrolled in the supplementary occupational pension scheme, but fellows may opt out if they wish. The KITE fellows will be employed full-time (38.7 h/week) and be entitled to 30 days of annual leave in addition to 5–8 public holidays, depending on the calendar year.

Furthermore, the fellows receive an additional research allowance of € 500 monthly on their own disposal to be used for travels to conferences, consumables, outreach activities, small equipment etc.

WHAT WE SEEK

KITE seeks excellent prospective fellows with original research ideas who

- are open towards development of career prospects in the academic, public and private sector
- will be present in Kiel for the duration of their entire project (mandatory), with the exception of secondments
- commit themselves to participate in an extensive training programme in research and career development, with an innovative approach, including networking, transferable skills training, and two secondments of minimum three months to renowned international research partners and partners in the non-academic sector.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

KITE fellows will be recruited in two open topic calls applying merit-based gender-fair criteria and transparent selection procedures according to the interdisciplinary potential of their project and their individual excellence.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The second call for proposals is open until 31 March 2024, 23:59 CEST

This call invites applications including a short proposal for an individual research project from postdoctoral researchers from all over the world who

- are interested in developing their own research profile and in forming a clear idea about their future career perspectives in the academic or non-academic sectors
- are ready to commit themselves to an extensive training programme in research and career development including two secondments and summer schools

Proposed projects should be linked to research conducted within one of the four priority research areas of Kiel University Kiel Life Science (KLS), Kiel Marine Science (KMS), Kiel Nano, Surface and Interface Science (KINSIS) or Societal, Environmental and Cultural Change (SECC). Projects will be carried out by KITE fellows in the research groups headed by professors or senior researchers from the KITE mentors’ pool.

Furthermore, the fellows receive an additional research allowance of € 500 monthly on their own disposal to be used for travels to conferences, consumables, outreach activities, small equipment etc.
WHO CAN APPLY

KiTE invites applications from excellent postdoctoral researchers of any nationality who
• are in possession of a **doctoral degree** at the deadline of the call
• have completed no more than **four years** of full-time equivalent research after finishing their doctorate (years of experience outside research and clearly documented career breaks will not count towards the maximum of four years)
• have not resided or carried out their main activity in Germany for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before the deadline of the KiTE call (MSCA mobility rule) (until March 31, 2024). Compulsory national service, short stays in Germany and time spent as part of a process for obtaining refugee status (under the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol) will not be taken into account
• have contacted a potential mentor ahead of proposal submission and have been able to secure a **mentor’s written commitment** to host the fellow.

Please note: Only proposals with a prospective mentor’s written commitment will be considered.

To receive a mentor’s commitment, applicants have to identify potential mentors with matching research areas (keywords) from the KiTE mentors’ pool who would be willing to host their projects.

Applicants can identify a suitable mentor by name or by keywords. Every mentor has indicated her/his primary keyword and two secondary keywords in order to guarantee interdisciplinary approach. Mentors are listed alphabetically with all related data and via given keywords. Please find mentors’ research profiles, their keywords and contact data in the **KiTE mentors’ pool**. For searching a mentor via keywords, please consult the **KiTE list of keywords** where mentors’ names are listed according to their expertise (primary keyword, secondary keyword 1 and secondary keyword 2). After identifying one potential mentor each applicant is invited to contact her/him as soon as possible at the stage of proposal preparation via email. If the contacted mentor is convinced of the proposed project idea, she/he will provide this particular applicant with a letter of commitment necessary to submit a proposal.

Although potential mentors have to be contacted by the applicants before submission of the proposal, they must not be involved in its preparation as this will hinder the principle of ‘individual-driven’ research

Although a proposed research idea not be supported by a given mentor, we kindly ask the applicants not to insist contacting the same mentor again.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

The following documents (on templates provided) must be submitted

- application form with personal information (to be filled out online)
- proposal submission form (for download)
- CV including evidence of the applicant’s excellence in research and professional experience, education, mobility and a list of five most relevant publications including an explanation of the applicant’s own contribution (for download)
- degree certificates, if applicable, translated into English
- Mentor’s written commitment (to be provided by the mentor).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Application form (to be filled out online)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- personal information (name, gender, nationality)</td>
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<td>- degree and date of degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>- current institution/country</td>
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<tr>
<td>- time spent outside research (parental leave/elder care, ill health, military service, contracts outside academia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- evidence that mobility criteria are met</td>
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<tr>
<td>- title of the project</td>
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<td>- desired PRA and desired mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>- mentor’s commitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>- keywords (primary and two secondary subject areas) according to list, see the KiTE list of keywords</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal submission form (template)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title and Abstract (1.500 letters)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body (5 pages)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- state of the art of the research field</td>
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<tr>
<td>- research questions, methods to be applied and expected results, reference to the evaluation criteria</td>
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<td>- gender dimension in research assessment</td>
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<td>- open science assessment</td>
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<td>- rough time table, incl. secondments, and budget requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>References (not part of page limit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics assessment form (2 pages, not part of page limit)</td>
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HOW TO APPLY

Applicants have to fill out an online application form, identify three keywords from the KiTE list of keywords and upload their application documents listed above as pdf (CV including publication list, project proposal, ethics assessment form, mentor’s commitment, degree certificates, with a certified translation into English, if applicable).

Keywords are research/subject areas used by KiTE to match mentors, fellows and external reviewers. We use keywords based on the Panel list of the European Research Council 2021–2022 (ERC). The ERC identifies three large areas of knowledge – Physical Sciences and Engineering (PE), Life Science (LS) and Social Sciences and Humanities (SH) in three colours – orange (PE), blue (LS) and green (SH). Every large area of knowledge is subdivided in broad disciplines, e.g. Physical Sciences and Engineering are subdivided in eleven disciplines: Mathematics (PE1), Fundamental Constituents of Matter (PE2), Condensed Matter Physics (PE3), Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences (PE4), … and Materials Engineering (PE11) and again in smaller categories, e.g. PE4 is subdivided in 18 categories, PE4_1 Physical chemistry, PE4_2 Spectroscopic and spectrometric techniques etc. We use these “smaller” categories as keywords.

All applicants are requested to choose one primary keyword and two secondary keywords from the KiTE list of keywords, preferably from at least two large areas of knowledge / two colours and enter only their numbers into the online application form, e.g. PE2_3, LS1_1, SH5_7 etc.

ETHICS REQUIREMENTS

Kiel University is committed to adhering to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity, as set out in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, which is considered a pre-requisite for excellent research. To this end, all applicants must complete an ethics assessment form (based on the Horizon Europe ethics issues table) as part of their application.

SUBMISSION

Please submit your complete application in English online via our website www.uni-kiel.de/en/kite until March 31, 2024 23:59 CEST

CALL TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 31, 2024</td>
<td>Opening date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 31, 2024, 23:59 CEST</td>
<td>Closing date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April – June 2024</td>
<td>Selection Step 1: Peer-review of the written proposals and the excellence of the applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2024</td>
<td>Result announcement for Selection Step 1 and invitation to Selection Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 weeks after result announcement</td>
<td>Redress procedure for Selection Step 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2024</td>
<td>Selection Step 2: Project idea presentation, open discussion and interview with the KiTE Selection Panel via video conference (Zoom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July – August 2024</td>
<td>Funding decision and result announcement for Selection Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 weeks after result announcement</td>
<td>Redress procedure for Selection Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2024</td>
<td>Job offer for selected candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September – November 2024</td>
<td>Fellows’ projects start</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SELECTION PROCEDURE AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Only complete proposals that meet the submission deadline (March 31, 2024, 23:59 CEST) and fulfil the formal requirements (PhD, research experience, mobility requirement, commitment of mentor) will be considered for the subsequent selection process. KiTE fellows will be selected in a two-stage peer-review process, including

• individual evaluation of the applicants’ excellence and their written proposals as Selection Step 1, and
• project idea presentation and discussion and interview of the applicants as the Selection Step 2.

The evaluation and selection process is organised entirely remotely in order to ensure equality for all participants, effective time management and maximum sustainability in line with the MSCA Green Charter (https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/about-msca/msca-green-charter).
SELECTION STEP 1

Each eligible application will be assigned to three external evaluators of the KiTE Selection Board. The KiTE Selection Board is an external panel whose members
• are highly cited researchers and experienced evaluators
• pursue an interdisciplinary research agenda
• show dedication to Open Science, and
• have a track record in training early-career researchers.

These experts, at least two of whom are international (i.e. based outside Germany), will follow transparent evaluation criteria (see Table 2) thus implementing the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and:
• focus on the indicators CV (research experience and merits, e.g. prizes, grants, public & stakeholder engagement), publication record and mobility to assess an individual’s excellence and
• on quality/credibility and innovation potential of the proposed research as well as
• assessments of interdisciplinarity, gender dimension in research and Open Science principles to assess the excellence of the proposed project (including timeline and budget plan).

Step 1 will also assess Impact and Implementation according to the subcriteria listed below. Proposals will be evaluated on their own merit, and not on their potential should certain changes be made.

Applicants must score a minimum of 70% to be eligible for Selection Step 2. Based on the evaluation results of Selection Step 1, the applicants with the six highest cumulative scores per priority research area (PRA) (total of 24 candidates for all four PRAs) will be invited to Selection Step 2. If the number of candidates exceeds six in a given PRA, a seventh and eighth will be put on the reserve list.

SELECTION STEP 2

The top six candidates per PRA with the highest scores will be invited to Selection Step 2, the oral and narrative part of the KiTE selection procedure.

Selection Step 2 will take place remotely on two days, via ZOOM. All invited candidates will be asked to join the session on one of these days depending on the chosen PRA. The link and the allotted individual timeslot will be sent via email.

The online meeting consists of a presentation session before lunch and an interview session after lunch. Each candidate will be allotted two timeslots (one for the presentation session before lunch and another one for the interview session after lunch). The candidates will be asked to join each session at least 20 minutes before the allotted timeslot and wait for their turn in the virtual waiting room until they will be let in by the moderator.

During the oral part, candidates will meet the KiTE Selection Panel (six experts representing two PRAs). The Central Gender Equality Commissioner, HRS4R Officer and a representative of the staff council of Kiel University will be present to monitor fairness of the procedure. The KiTE programme coordinator and programme manager will take part in the whole procedure accordingly.
Each criterion/sub-criterion will be scored on a scale from 0 to 5 (with up to one decimal place)
0 – Proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
1 – Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
2 – Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3 – Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
4 – Very good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
5 – Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The cumulative scores per criterion will be calculated and weighted:
• 50 % for excellence of the applicant and the proposed project;
• 30 % for impact;
• 20 % for quality and efficiency of the implementation.

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**Table 2 Evaluation criteria and weighting during peer review**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellence</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Quality and efficiency of the implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Quality and pertinence of the project’s research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art)</td>
<td>• Potential of the researcher to reach or re-enforce professional maturity during the fellowship based on the measures by KiTE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant, and the quality and appropriateness of Open Science practices)</td>
<td>• Potential of the project’s contribution to addressing global societal challenges to the respective PRA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quality of the researcher’s professional experience, competences and skills</td>
<td>• Potential of developing new and lasting research collaborations, achieving transfer of knowledge between participating organisations and contribution to improving research and innovation potential at the European and global level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>50 %</th>
<th>30 %</th>
<th>20 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority in case of proposals with the same score (ex aequo)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The presentation session consists of a pitch (short project presentation) followed by a discussion with the KITE Selection Panel. The aim of the presentation session is to show the candidates’ potential for holistic development including their scientific knowledge, experimental, networking and transferable skills.

In the 5 minutes pitch, candidates are asked to briefly introduce themselves and concisely summarize their project proposal and answer the question “Why am I – the candidate with my great and innovative ideas and the research results I expect – a perfect match for Kiel University and the PRA I have chosen and vice versa?”. In other words, why must the proposed research with its great goals conducted by the candidate and expected results achieved by the candidate in the mentor’s group in exactly this constellation (candidate – mentor – Kiel University) be considered as a perfect match.

All candidates must note that the duration of the pitch is strictly limited to 5 minutes. They will be warned 30 seconds in advance to be able to finish the presentation timely.

After the pitch, a 10 minutes discussion with the KITE Selection Panel follows.

In the discussion, the criteria – Excellence, Impact, Quality and efficiency of the implementation (see Table 2) - will be assessed by applying a more ‘narrative’ approach inquiring why the proposed research is important, and why the candidate is the right person to carry it out.

After the discussion, the candidate has to leave the meeting room.

Immediately after the presentation session, the members of the KITE Selection Panel will score each candidate’s performance. All three criteria will be weighted accordingly (Excellence 50%, Impact 30%, Quality and efficiency of the implementation 20%). The average score will be considered in the final rating by 40%. This score will not be communicated to the candidate at this stage. All candidates take part in the following interview session.

This session consists of a set of standardised questions and will be conducted by three KITE Selection Panel members of the chosen PRA. Each interview takes 15 minutes. Candidates are asked to wait for their individual timeslot in the virtual waiting room and must leave the meeting immediately after the interview and keep the content of the interview confidential. All three criteria will be weighted accordingly (Excellence 50%, Impact 30%, Quality and efficiency of the implementation 20%). The average score will be considered in the final rating by 20%. This score will not be communicated to the candidate at this stage.
**FINAL RATING OF THE CANDIDATES**

Being aware that scores of written applications (Selection Step 1) could differ significantly from individual performance during the Selection Step 2, the final rating will be calculated taking into account all steps, i.e. the scores of the written application (40%), the presentation and discussion of the project idea (40%) and the interview (20%) to calculate a final score for each candidate.

On this basis, four ranked lists of candidates will be developed (one for each PRA). The two top candidates will be offered a KiTE position. If they decline the offer, the two middle ranked candidates will move up.

Proposals with an identical score (ex aequo) will be ranked giving preference to the applicant whose individual excellence and proposal was awarded the higher score in the criterion Excellence. As a secondary criterion, preference will be given to applicants from underrepresented groups, i.e. female applicants or from less developed countries or emerging economies.

The funding decision will be communicated to the candidates at the latest within four weeks after the funding recommendation of the KiTE Selection Panel.

**REDRESS**

Applicants can apply for redress within three weeks of receiving the written evaluation result by writing a one-page letter stating their case to the KiTE redress committee per email, via the programme management. The redress committee will, within two weeks after receiving the letter, evaluate the case and inform the applicant of the outcome.

The redress procedure will only evaluate the selection procedure and perceived incorrect application of the eligibility criteria but not the scientific judgement of the selection board members.

In case the redress is deemed justified, the application will be re-evaluated and/or an interview will be carried out.
MENTORSHIP AND TRAINING CONCEPT
MENTORING

Opposed to the classical supervision model, professors and senior researchers hosting the fellows are addressed as KITE mentors. They will provide necessary research infrastructure and guidance in terms of successfully implementing the research project and be a part of the Project Advisory Committee.

Individually, each fellow will be mentored by her/his own interdisciplinary and intersectoral Project Advisory Committee (PAC). PAC plays a central role in providing guidance with respect to the implementation of the project itself but most importantly support career planning of the fellows.

The mentoring team supporting each fellow consists of:

- **The main mentor** (commitment during the application period for eligible application necessary!)
- **A co-mentor with expertise in a complementary research discipline** (will be named after the project start in Kiel)
- **A third mentor, preferably from a non-academic implementing partner institution, which will likely host one of the secondments**

In order to ensure a more trustful and engaging relationship with the fellow, PAC meetings should take place every six months over the course of the KITE programme, at least two of them on site:

- ICDP development within eight weeks of the project start
- Career reflexion meeting two years after the project start

Regular additional meetings are strongly encouraged. Fellow–mentor meetings should take place every month. Mentorship activities and individual counselling (career prospects in Germany and beyond, how to work the university, conflict management etc.) will be actively supported by the experienced and dedicated advisors of Kiel University’s Postdoc Center and KITE Programme Management. Furthermore, female KITE fellows can take advantage of the university-wide mentoring programme via: mento_international for postdoctoral researchers aiming for an academic career.
KiTE TRAINING PROGRAMME

A comprehensive training programme is offered to help KiTE fellows to further develop their core research skills. Therefore, they have to complete two secondments (one academic and one non-academic, including one international) and select options based on their individual training and career needs from the broad range of research-based and transferable skills courses. The main objective of the training modules of the career development programme is to empower the KiTE fellows in a holistic way through exposure to interdisciplinary, international and intersectoral aspects of research thus providing an excellent basis for a rapid progress to key leadership positions in the global labour market – be it academic, private or the public sector. Embedded in the interdisciplinary environments of the PRAs, they will have access to excellent training opportunities in integrative research without neglecting their own disciplinary areas.

For KiTE fellows, participation in two summer schools as well as two secondments is mandatory. Furthermore, fellows will commit in writing to complete the mandatory training, engage in the mandatory outreach activities and comply with the regular status reporting. Participation and engagement of the fellows will be monitored through status reporting and PAC meetings.

RESEARCH-RELATED TRAINING PROGRAMME

Research-related training will be available through the host’s research environment, with access to continuing education opportunities offered, for instance, by Kiel’s large collaborative research projects. Where applicable, trainings will include acquisition of new technical research skills. Compared to many researchers of their career stage who are restricted by limited degrees of freedom due to a narrow research topic and tight supervision rules in their research environment, the primary goal will be to provide the fellows with a high level of independence. They will thus acquire advanced skills in research management when implementing their project, when developing their personalised training programme and when identifying suitable partners for their secondments. Although assisted and (if necessary) guided by their mentors and the programme management, they will be motivated to acquire new skills in project, self and time management as well as risk assessment. With opportunities to supervise students and student assistants, and in some cases technical staff, they can add hands-on training in people management to their profile.

NON-RESEARCH-ORIENTED TRAINING PROGRAMME

The fellows will meet as a cohort for two summer schools focusing on transferable skills in research and career development as well as three complementary training modules (TM) in transferable skills for academic careers and three modules for careers outside of academia.

Table 3 Training scheme for KiTE fellows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st Summer School</th>
<th>2nd Summer School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender dimension in research</td>
<td>Public engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen science</td>
<td>Open Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant writing</td>
<td>Applications and CV writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Job interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) management</td>
<td>Start up – from idea to founder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research training sensu stricto: • Research (basic, interdisciplinary, technical) • Management skills • Networking (cross-disciplinary, international, cross-sectoral)</td>
<td>Secondment 1: international academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondment 2: intersectoral non-academic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SUMMER SCHOOLS**

KiTE summer schools will cover transferable skills that are relevant to research and career development.

The first summer school will address:
- teaching and learning
- different dimensions of leadership
- academic career paths in Germany and matching funding opportunities
- individual career planning.

The second summer school will address:
- concepts and aspects of multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary research
- ethics and research integrity with a particular focus on equal opportunities, Open Science and communication with the general public and entrepreneurship.

The summer schools will be complemented by four in-depth modules on Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI):
- gender dimension in research (gender balance in teams and research content)
- public engagement (communicate and interact with the general public)
- Citizen Science (how to integrate citizens in research design and processes) and
- Open Science (conditions, advantages and challenges in managing – and sharing research data).

Fellows are required to complete at least two of the four one-day modules according to individual preferences and, furthermore, six workshops (see Table 3).

**SECONDMENTS**

Each fellow is expected to embark on two secondments (one academic and one intersectoral, including one international), for a minimum of three months each. These measures offer hands-on opportunities to establish long-lasting high-profile networks with a strong potential to improve employability and career prospects both inside and outside academia. Hence, they will serve different purposes:
- broadening the fellow’s views/expertise through learning new approaches/techniques related to the research topic but also related to transferable skills, e.g. research culture, leadership, teaching, supervision etc.
- broadening the fellow’s networks in a different country and/or sector or maintaining existing networks/collaborations through exchange with partners known to the fellow
- getting insights into work practices in the non-academic sector (private, public or non-governmental)
- paving the ground for future careers and employment opportunities (academic or non-academic).

**PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Kiel University believes in the innovative potential of talents to help solve scientific and social problems and is actively involved in media outlets such as European Researcher’s Night (ERN), Night of the Profs, Kieler Uni Live, Childrens’ University and many more. Therefore, all KiTE fellows will have to participate in the outreach activities and present their research to the public. Minimum requirements will be participation in the social media campaign of the KiTE programme, participation in the annual ERN and organisation of two science slam events at the Kiel Week (Kieler Woche) jointly with the other members of their cohort. Fellows are also expected to be available for interviews for newspapers or broadcasts if requested. KiTE fellows will have full access to all outreach platforms of Kiel University and will be strongly urged to contribute. This will be accompanied by a specific training on communication strategies, means of communication, interaction with the public, particularly children and citizen science. They will also have access to a standard project branding kit (project video, roll-up, template for posters and ppt) for these outreach activities.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS / APPLICANTS

• I’m from a country outside of Europe, can I apply?
Yes, the call is open for all nationalities. Please note that all selected KITE fellows will have to move to Kiel, Germany for the entire duration of their project.

• What is MSCA?
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), Part of Horizon Europe, are the European Union’s flagship funding programme for doctoral education and postdoctoral training of researchers. Please find more information here: https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/about-msca

• In which language should I apply?
Please submit your application and proposal in English only.

• My degree certificates and other documents are issued not in English. Should I translate them into English?
Yes, please provide all necessary application documents with a certified translation into English.

• Can I apply for another funding at the same time?
We strongly encourage you to apply for alternative funding schemes, e.g. to the MSCA individual postdoctoral fellowship call. However, you cannot accept two positions at the same time.

• Can I contact more than one potential mentor?
Yes, but you have to decide in which PRA and in whose research group you would like to carry out your project.

• Can I submit more than one proposal within this call?
No, only one submission per person is possible.

• I am already in Germany. Can I apply?
Yes, if you comply with the MSCA mobility rule.

• When will my proposed project start?
Between September and November 2024.

• Do I have to specify my planned secondments in the proposal?
If you already know where you would like to spend your secondments, yes. If not, it’s okay and we will support the fellows with that.

• How will the secondments be organized?
You will have to complete two secondments of your choice up to three months each, one to a research organization in Germany or abroad and another one to a non-academic implementing partner. KITE will support you with the organization of the secondments.

• Do I need to provide references?
No, but you have to secure a letter of commitment issued by a potential mentor from the KITE mentors’ pool.

• How do I find a KITE mentor?
Please download the pdf with the KITE list of keywords and KITE mentors’ pool and look for research areas you are interested in. All available KITE mentors are listed with their specific keywords. You can also search for institutes, particular PRAs etc., but only within the given KITE mentors’ pool.

• How do I convince a potential mentor to provide me with her/his letter of commitment?
Discuss your project idea with her/him. If your project corresponds with her/his research interests and your background complies with KITE requirements, your chances to receive a letter of commitment are very high. Should a proposed research idea not be supported by a given mentor, we kindly ask the applicant not to insist contacting the same mentor again.

• Are there any compulsory elements in the proposal which will be evaluated?
Yes, please consider the gender dimension in your proposal. Project timeline and the budget are mandatory parts of the proposal and will be evaluated as well.

• How are career breaks (parental leave, elderly care, compulsory national service etc.) taken into account?
Only clearly documented time of parental leave, compulsory national service, employment outside academia without focus on research will be taken into account. Special rules apply for maternity: For each child born within the above mentioned eligibility period of 4 years, 18 months will be deducted from the experience in research unless the applicant can document a longer parental leave prior to the call deadline. Paternity: For each child born within the above mentioned eligibility period of 4 years, the documented time of parental leave taken until the call deadline will be deducted from the experience in research.

• I don’t know anyone in Kiel. How do I find a mentor working in Kiel?
Please check the KITE mentors’ pool. Mentors are listed with their research interests (keywords). We asked every mentor to indicate a primary and two secondary keywords. Please find your own keywords in the KITE list of keywords and decide which mentor could host you in her/his group.

• What level of German is needed?
The working language of KITE is English. There is no requirement to speak German. KITE fellows and their spouses will be offered a German conversational language course.

• I have defended my PhD thesis but not yet received my certificate, can I apply?
Yes, if you comply with the MSCA mobility rule.

• Can I modify my submitted application before the call deadline?
It depends on the date of submission. Applications submitted later than March 24, 2024 cannot be modified anymore.

• Will I receive a confirmation that you received my application?
As the submission is to be made online only via www.uni-kiel.de/en/kite, you will receive an automatic reply that your application has been submitted. After the eligibility check and after Step 1 and Step 2 we will inform you about your results.

• Do I need a visa for Germany?
During the online application process, no visa is necessary. For successful applicants Kiel University will provide any kind of support.

• Can my family join me?
Yes, you can move to Kiel with your family, but it’s up to you. If you have a family, you will receive a family allowance anyway.

• How can I find accommodation in Kiel?
The KITE programme management will provide you with the contact data of related services of Kiel University and support you.

• Who can advise me regarding my project proposal?
Regarding the content your potential mentor can advise you, regarding the formalities KITE programme manager Dr. Nadezhda Kakhro will advise you.

• What are the topics of KITE?
KITE is an open-topic interdisciplinary programme. Please check the KITE list of keywords.

• I cannot find my research topics in the provided KITE list of keywords. What should I do?
You can contact us via e-mail kite@pz.uni-kiel.de and we will try to help you.

INFORMATION FOR KiTE (POTENTIAL) MENTORS

WHAT DOES BEING A KITE MENTOR MEAN?

Mentors are one of the three KiTE focus groups (next to applicants/fellows and external reviewers). Mentors are experienced senior researchers affiliated with one of the four priority research areas (PRAs) of Kiel University and willing to host a KITE fellow in their research groups and to guide them on the way of their professional development. KITE fellows will be employed at Kiel University by their host (the MSCA position costs will be covered by KITE). However, as KITE fellows are early career researchers having completed their doctorate who proposed their own project idea, they are Principal Investigators (PIs) to their own research projects. That’s why hosts at Kiel University who expressed their interest to collaborate with KITE will be addressed as mentors of the fellows as opposed to supervisors.

Mentors are (full) members of KLS, KMS, KiNSIS or SECC – (junior) professors and independent research group leaders – who have an outstanding publication record and are experienced in supervising and mentoring doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. They commit to the mentorship for the entire duration of the KITE fellows’ project (three years) and hence have to be employed by Kiel University during this time.

Professors appointed at Kiel University but with an (additional) affiliation e.g. at institutes or member organisations of the Max Planck Society, the Fraunhofer Society, the Helmholtz Association and the Leibniz Association are not eligible to become a KiTE mentor.

KiTE mentors will be carefully selected based on their academic track and supervision record. Before committing to mentorship, mentors are asked to confirm that they hold a „Didactics in Higher Education“ certificate or have received good scores in the last two annual teaching feedback exercises. One mentor can host more than one KITE fellow.

All applicants have to contact their potential mentors ahead of proposal submission and discuss their project idea with them. Potential mentors will commit in writing to providing mentorship as well as infrastructure and consumables necessary for a successful implementation of the fellow’s project. These letters of commitment, signed by the potential mentor, have to be submitted with the applicant’s proposal. Only proposals with a prospective mentor’s written commitment to host the candidate will be considered.

Potential mentors have to be contacted by the applicants before submission of the proposal but must not be involved in its preparation as this will hinder the principle of ‘individual-driven’ research.

KEYWORDS

In order to help applicants find a potential mentor and to match all three focus groups, KiTE uses keywords based on the panel list determined by the European Research Council (ERC)

Every large area of knowledge* is subdivided in broad disciplines which again consist of subcategories. These subcategories are used as keywords and numbered accordingly. KiTE potential mentors are asked to indicate a primary and two secondary keywords related to their expertise during the registration, preferably in two different large areas of knowledge / two colours so that each mentor marks at least two large areas of expertise (two colours) in order to ensure interdisciplinary approach.

The names of potential mentors, their affiliation and membership in a PRA, contact data (e-mail and link to website) and the chosen keywords will be listed in the KiTE mentors’ pool published together with the call documentation on the KiTE website so that potential candidates with the matching research interests can contact the mentors in order to discuss their project idea and ask them to become their mentor.

MENTORSHIP CONCEPT

To reinforce the interdisciplinary nature of the projects, KiTE fellows will be supported by a mentoring team at their side. Mentors will be made aware of the KiTE mentoring concept during the exclusive kick-off workshop held just before the start of the fellowships. During the workshop they will be introduced into the programme and familiarized with the details. All mentors will be informed about the latest EU standards in research and innovation (R&I), as well as the EU recommendation on the management of intellectual property and trained as well to safeguard quality of the mentoring. Besides, mentors must commit in writing to provide the necessary resources (time, infrastructure, work space) and independence to the fellows.

*Areas of knowledge determined by ERC in 2021–2022
THE INTERDISCIPLINARY AND INTERSECTORAL MENTORING TEAM

The main mentor commits to mentorship during the application period and hosts the selected fellow in her/his research group (the MSCA position is paid by KiTE).

A co-mentor with expertise in a complementary research discipline to be named after the project start in Kiel.

A third mentor, preferably (but not necessarily) from a non-academic implementing partner institution, which will likely host one of the secondments.

TIME COMMITMENT

The idea of KiTE is to embed the fellows in a supportive environment and provide them with an optimal basis for career advancement. The KiTE fellows will be integrated in the mentors’ research group, participate in regular group meetings and group activities, but as a PI work on her/his project independently.

The mentor will interact with the fellow in the following points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>What</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 26, 2024</td>
<td>Commitment to mentorship as well as infrastructure (work space and equipment) and (if applicable) consumables necessary for a successful implementation of the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2024</td>
<td>Support of the fellow with ethics assessment of the proposal after the funding decision has been made, but before an employment contract will be issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2024</td>
<td>Bilateral mentorship agreement with deadlines for ICDP completion and status reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within eight weeks of the project start</td>
<td>Support of the fellow with the developing of the Individual Career Development Plan (in cooperation with PAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the first six months of the fellowship</td>
<td>Support of the fellow with the development of a Data Management Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every month</td>
<td>Regular personal meetings with the fellow to discuss and justify adjustments in the work and training plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every six months</td>
<td>Meeting with the PAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two years after project start</td>
<td>Career reflexion meeting (in cooperation with PAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After KiTE</td>
<td>Since many exploitable results will only be available towards the end of the project, when the fellows have left, some of the exploitation activity, including liaison with the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) will be managed by the mentors after the end of KiTE in line with the Intellectual Property Rights policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS / MENTORS

- **How much money do KiTE fellows have at their disposal?**
  KiTE is funded within the COFUND-Programme of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) and offers full-time employment with an annual gross of €72,100 (€75,000 for fellows with family) in line with the current MSCA rates for experienced researchers and a personal research allowance of €500 as well as additional benefits. Other costs have to be funded from other sources or by the mentor.

- **Can I apply for additional funding together with my fellow to cover research costs?**
  Yes, you can apply for additional money to carry out your fellow’s research project at other funding organizations, e.g. DFG etc. Please check also intramural funding opportunities of Kiel University for postdoctoral researchers: [https://www.postdocs.uni-kiel.de/en/intramural-research-funding](https://www.postdocs.uni-kiel.de/en/intramural-research-funding)

- **In case the candidate I committed to host has not been selected in the first call, can I though participate in the offered trainings for mentors?**
  Yes, just let us know that you wish to receive mentorship trainings.

- **Can I participate in the selection procedure?**
  No, the selection is carried out by an external selection board.

- **Can I invite anyone whom I already know to participate in the KiTE call?**
  Yes, you are very welcome to distribute information on the KiTE call in your network. However, you must not be involved in the proposal preparation as this will hinder the principle of 'individual-driven' research.
**KiTE GOVERNANCE**

KiTE has a transparent governance structure, see Table 4. The programme is headed by the programme coordinator (PC), Dr. Gesche Braker, director of the Postdoc Center at Kiel University, who is highly experienced in setting up and running postdoctoral training programmes. She is responsible for the overall structure and substantive implementation of KiTE as well as its outreach and dissemination strategy.

The programme manager (PM), Dr. Nadezhda Kakhro, sets up the programme and organises the recruitment process, looks after the day-to-day business of KiTE, and all activities related to implementing the fellowships, including practical support for the fellows (onboarding, secondments, status reporting), organising the training activities (summer schools and transferable skills trainings, career development meetings), managing public outreach activities (website and social media) and dissemination as well. The PM is the fellows’ central contact person.

Moreover, the PC and PM receive professional support from the responsible administrative service departments at Kiel University, including Human Resources (for recruitment and employment modalities), the Press Office (for media and outreach work) as well as the European Office thus ensuring successful implementation of KiTE.

An internal committee, the KiTE Steering Committee (SC), advises the PM and guides the recruitment process as well as the management of the programme. The SC meets at least every six months and consist of four researchers (all full members in one of the PRAs), the Vice-President for International Affairs and Early Career Researchers, the Equal Opportunity Officer, the PC as well as a KiTE fellow representative.

### Members of the KiTE Steering Committee:

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<tr>
<th>PRA / Department / Office</th>
<th>Members of the Steering Committee</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chair of the Steering Committee</td>
<td>Prof. Ralph Schneider</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice-President for International Affairs and Early Career Researchers</td>
<td>Prof. Rainer Adelung</td>
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<td>KINSIS</td>
<td>Prof. Andre Franke</td>
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<td>KLS</td>
<td>Prof. Katrin Rehdanz</td>
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<td>KMS</td>
<td>Prof. Annette Haug</td>
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<td>SECC</td>
<td>Dr. habil. Iris Werner</td>
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<td>Central Gender Equality Officer</td>
<td>Dr. habil. Gesche Braker</td>
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<td>Postdoc Center</td>
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The Head of the EU Office of Kiel University Linda Piálek is a permanent guest.
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