



3rd Call for proposals: IDEA-League Fellowships 2026 –

*Scholarship program for **outgoing** scientists to encourage research collaboration at other IDEA League universities with special focus on the use of research infrastructure (RI)*

Deadline: September 23, 2025

Background

The five IDEA-League universities have agreed on a fellowship program to strengthen scientific exchange, long-term collaboration, and the use of specific research infrastructure (RI). Each IDEA-League university conducts the fellowship calls autonomously and sets its own priorities.

The IDEA-League Fellowships enable scientists to carry out research activities of their own choice in collaboration with the respective host institute at ideally two or more universities of the alliance. In addition to establishing long-term collaboration, the use of research infrastructure should also be targeted.

To learn more about the IDEA League visit <https://idealeague.org/>.

General conditions of this call

- This call is open to all researchers of RWTH Aachen University who are at least in a postdoctoral position.
- Funding is provided for research stays that can be carried out between January 1 – October 31, 2026.
- Each fellow ideally visits two or more IDEA-League universities. The overall duration must be between one and six months and can be divided into shorter periods of at least one month's stay at each partner university.
- The applicant may be accompanied by one person of his/her research group (master or doctoral student).
- A report about the scholarship must be submitted after the project is finished.

Funding

The funding may be used to cover travel expenses, accommodation costs and fees for use of the host institutions' research infrastructure.

The visiting scholar's research stay may start in January 2026 and must be completed and all expenses be paid by October 31, 2026.

The total budget for this call is 100.000 €.

Eligibility criteria

- Postdocs require an endorsement by the professor or head of services.
- Applicants should speak English fluently (or the language spoken at the host universities) and show intercultural competence.
- During his or her visit abroad, the scientist is supposed to give at least one talk at the host universities in which RWTH Aachen University is presented.
- The duration of the stay should be at least one month at each location.
- Funding cannot be used for conferences.

The proposal (in pdf format) must be written in English and may not exceed

- 5 pages if two destinations are visited,
- 6 pages if three destinations are visited and
- 7 pages if four destinations are visited. The letter(s) from the host institution(s) do not count to the 5, 6 or 7 pages.

The proposal must contain:

1. Name of applicant and, if applicable, name of the accompanying person.
2. The respective institutes and contact details of host institutions.
3. For postdocs: endorsement by the professor or head of services (a few lines, signed by the professor/head of services)
4. A **short** CV including the five most important publications.
5. A brief, generally understandable description of the research project. It must describe the collaboration with the host and, if applicable, the use of the research infrastructure.
6. A budget plan and information about the course and the period(s) of the stay.

Furthermore: Letter(s) of support from the host institution(s).

Please note: Proposals that do not comply with the formal criteria will be excluded from the reviewing process.

Deadline

Applications need to be submitted by September 23, 2025 through our online submission platform at <http://portal.ers.rwth-aachen.de>, call "IDEA-League Fellowships 2026". All applications will be assessed by the enlarged ERS steering committee.

With best regards,
ERS International Board

Univ.-Prof. Dr. rer. soc. Ute Habel
Univ.-Prof. Dr.med. Tim Brümmendorf
Univ.-Prof. Dr. phil. Stella Neumann
Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Heinz Pitsch
Univ.-Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Matthias Wuttig

Dr. rer. nat. Elke Müller
Henriette Finsterbusch, Ph.D.
Dr.-Ing. Vera Eckers
Dipl.-Des. (FH) Susanne Römmer

For further information, please contact:
Dipl.-Des.(FH) Susanne Römmer
ERS International
Fon: +49 241 80 20794
Mail: ers@ers.rwth-aachen.de