



Guidelines for the International Max Planck Research Schools (IMPRS)

(Senate resolution of 13 March 2015; modified on 17 March 2017)

The IMPRS Programme has established itself on the basis of its three characteristic features - structuring, internationalization, and close and equal collaboration with the universities - as a successful model for the qualification of doctoral students. In the meantime, it is recognized both nationally and internationally. The programme is therefore intended to be continued and further improved on the basis of the decision of the Senate of the Max Planck Society formulated in March 1999 and updated in March 2010, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding between the German Rectors Conference and the Max Planck Society for the further development of the IMPRS of 14 March 2008.

Alternative forms of joint doctoral programmes between research institutions of the Max Planck Society and universities may be considered under particular circumstances, but would essentially not be recommended by the Max Planck Society as models. An integration of IMPRS in other structures, such as, for example, graduate colleges, may be useful, insofar as they do not detract from the principles and their transparency remains.

There can and should be no uniform structure for the IMPRS. The structural diversity of the existing IMPRS is well justified by the different disciplinary cultures, as well as by flexible adaptation to the particular local conditions (e.g. partner university). On the basis of the experience of recent years and under consideration of the changed scientific-political landscape, however, the following guidelines for the establishment, continuation, evaluation and financing of IMPRS are defined.

1. The basis for the establishment and further development of the IMPRS is formed by the concept adopted by the Senate in March 2010, centred around internationalization, cooperation and equitable collaboration with the partner universities, the joint scientific programme and the international announcement of places for doctoral students. The six-year cycle has proven itself and should be maintained.

2. Every IMPRS should function on the basis of the *Guidelines for doctoral education in the Max Planck Society*. However, TAC should be the normal case in IMPRS.
3. Each IMPRS should implement transparent and collegial structures for the implementation of the programme, which also includes the appointment of the voting members of the IMPRS. Decisions of the IMPRS - whether about the admission of doctoral students, the composition of the TAC, teaching programmes or other activities - should in principle take place on the multiple signature principle, where the decision procedures are clearly regulated and must be known to all participants. Particular weight should be placed on the integration of Group Leaders and junior scientists as voting members. Doctoral students should also be adequately involved in the decisions, e.g. by sending elected representatives to the decision-making bodies.
4. Besides their scientific excellence, IMPRS should be distinguished by their exemplary support and integration of their doctoral students. Besides the points above, particular attention should be paid to measures which
 - a. ease the integration of foreign doctoral students,
 - b. provide possibilities for participation in teaching,
 - c. provide opportunities for the acquisition of "professional skills" (e.g. presentation techniques, intercultural communication, writing of proposals and applications, development of leadership skills),
 - d. facilitate the transition into the next professional phase, whether within or outside of the academic sciences (e.g. by mentoring, industry-related visits, career fairs, networking measures),
 - e. insofar as regarded as sensible by the main supervisor/TAC, and after timely submission of the dissertation: if appropriate, the provision of funds to finance the transition phase (for max. 12 months) between completion of the dissertation and starting a new position (e.g. "wrap-up" postdoc places/grants), to complete publications after the granting of the doctorate or to bridge unavoidable waiting time.
5. IMPRS can be considered for planning as long term structures. It is necessary to allow sufficient flexibility and incentives for scientific development and renewal of personnel. An IMPRS may generally be continued for a maximum of three funding periods of six years each. In the event that a successfully established IMPRS ought to be continued beyond this overall duration, a new application must be made in the framework of the annual round of applications. In order to keep up the IMPRS's visibility, the respective existing name can be maintained.
6. It is recommended that IMPRS develop an alumni concept that contributes to network building and e.g. through *career tracking* allows conclusions for the future development of the programme.

7. The application for and financing of IMPRS should proceed modularly according to a modular concept. All or only individual components may be applied for, with justification, though the following modules are recommended as a basis:

- **Master Stage module** (only for IMPRS which have an upstream master study course stage)

- **Coordination module** (only personnel). It is recommended to develop standards for the personnel requirements in the coordination, which – taking into account the structure of the school (e.g. with/without MS stage, supraregional or not etc.) – should scale with the size of the school.

- **Gender equality module and compatibility of career and family**

- **Materials and Travel Costs module**. This also includes all expenses for IMPRS activities (apart from personnel costs).

- **Doctoral support module** (grant/contract, incl. wrap-up support)

The financial requirements for each of these modules are to be indicated separately and justified. In the creation of the finance plan, an overall cost calculation should be presented at the end, where it is specified for every item which means will be applied for the IMPRS, and which from other sources (with reference). The contributions of the partner university should also be documented.

In general, a significant share of the financing is expected from the participating research institutions. Thus, the aim should be that the financing of doctoral students comes increasingly from the support for junior scientists.

8. The establishment and extension of IMPRS assumes the implementation of the guidelines for doctoral education in the Max Planck Society. It should be evaluated critically by an independent expert group in every support phase. Quality assurance should take place in a competitive, objective and transparent evaluation and selection procedure.