



UNIVERSITÄT
DES
SAARLANDES



HOMFOR

Homburg Research Funding Program

Medical Faculty

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1 Objective

With the HOMFOR program the Medical Faculty of Saarland University aims to create improved conditions for high-quality, internationally competitive, and in particular interdisciplinary research. Both clinical, patient-oriented research and basic medical research can be supported. The sole criterion for funding decisions within HOMFOR is the scientific excellence of the proposed project and the applicant. The HOMFOR program is thus a key instrument of the Medical Faculty for ensuring the quality of medical research in Homburg and for supporting promising new research priorities within the faculty. Moreover, HOMFOR provides researchers at the Medical Faculty of Saarland University with the necessary conditions to improve their ability to acquire external third-party funding, thereby sustaining and expanding national and international excellence in Homburg.

2 Types of Applications

2.1 Funding for Early-Career Researchers

2.1.1 HOMFOR-Nachwuchs

Innovative projects from all areas of medicine are eligible for funding, with the goal of enabling early-career researchers to acquire their own third-party funding in the medium term. The funding period is 1 year with a maximum of 12,500 € material costs.

Requirements for the application:

- Application max. 5 years after first doctorate (parental leave is taken into account; if the doctoral procedure has not yet been completed, proof that the doctoral thesis has been submitted for examination)
- A maximum of 2 funded applications per applicant (but not in the same year)
- For a second application: Final report from the first funded project must be submitted before a new application

2.1.2 HOMFOR-Exzellent

At the end of their HOMFOR-Nachwuchs project—or within a maximum of one year afterward—early-career researchers may submit a separate application for HOMFOR-Exzellent funding. The Research Dean's Office will inform eligible candidates about this opportunity in due time. These applicants must present their projects to the Research Committee during a scientific symposium. A maximum of 2 projects per year will be selected for full funding. Funded projects include a doctoral position (E13/2, according to UdS budgetary guidelines) and 12,500 €/year material costs. The

funding period is three years. HOMFOR-Exzellent grantees are required to report regularly on their project progress at the annual symposium. By the end of the three-year funding period, a third-party funding application must be submitted.

Requirements for the application:

- Immediately after the funded HOMFOR-Nachwuchs application or within one year.

2.2 HOMFOR-Anschub

Innovative projects from all areas of medicine aimed at preparing third-party funded research projects are eligible. The funding period is one year with a maximum of 20,000 € material costs. From the 2026 funding period onward, the rule applies to all applicants (regardless of their previous HOMFOR history) that each funded HOMFOR-Anschub project must result in a submitted third-party funding application. On this application the applicant must be the principal investigator. Only if this requirement is fulfilled, a new HOMFOR-Anschub application can be submitted.

Requirements for the application:

- Completed doctorate
- If a previous project has been funded (from 2026 funding period onward):
 - Final report of the previously funded project
 - Third-party funding application derived from the funded project with applicant as principal investigator
 - Confirmation of submission from the third-party funding agency

2.3 HOMFOR-Idee

Highly innovative ideas from all fields of medicine that are not yet fully developed into fundable projects but have the potential to evolve into exciting new projects may be supported. The funding duration is 1 year with a maximum of 5,000 € material costs.

Requirements for the application:

- Complete doctorate
- If a previous project has been funded
 - Final report of the previously funded project

3 Application Rules

In addition to the aforementioned eligibility criteria for each type of application, the following rules must be followed. Otherwise, the application will be directly rejected without review:

- Only one application can be submitted per applicant.

- The application is not submitted concurrently to any other research-funding programs within or outside the university, nor does it overlap thematically with other applications from the same department.
- Applicants must include a statement from their clinic/institute director confirming that they will be employed at the institution for the entire duration of the HOMFOR project and will not be more than 65% funded through third-party grants (exception: HOMFOR-Idee may be submitted even if the applicant is 100% third-party funded).
- For HOMFOR-Nachwuchs, HOMFOR-Anschub and HOMFOR-Idee, only material costs can be requested and spent. Applications will only be reviewed if a detailed and transparent budget plan is included. Funds for travel, literature, scholarships, guest researchers or personnel (except HOMFOR-Exzellent) cannot be requested.
- All necessary permits for animal experiments, ethics approvals or S2 approvals must be in place at the time of application.
- Persons eligible for LOM (Leistungsorientierte Mittelvergabe) are not eligible to apply (exception: HOMFOR-Anschub and HOMFOR-Idee may be also applied by junior professors within the first two years of their junior professorship).
- All applications must be submitted electronically via the HOMFOR application database. Application forms must be fully completed, and all required documents must be submitted.

4 Application Review

Submitted applications will be reviewed by two members of the Research Committee and one member of a clinical department.

Evaluation criteria include (but are not limited to):

1. Originality/relevance of the research question
2. Preliminary work
3. Feasibility
4. Clarity and structure of the proposal
5. Past performance of the applicant

5 Success Monitoring

A final report of no more than ½ A4 page must be submitted no later than 6 months after the end of the funding period. In addition, the publications and third-party applications emerging from the project must be listed.

6 Publications

In HOMFOR publications, the acknowledgement or funding statement must mention the funding by HOMFOR including the funding period.

Example: „*This work was funded by the research program of the Saarland University Medical Faculty (HOMFOR 2026).*“