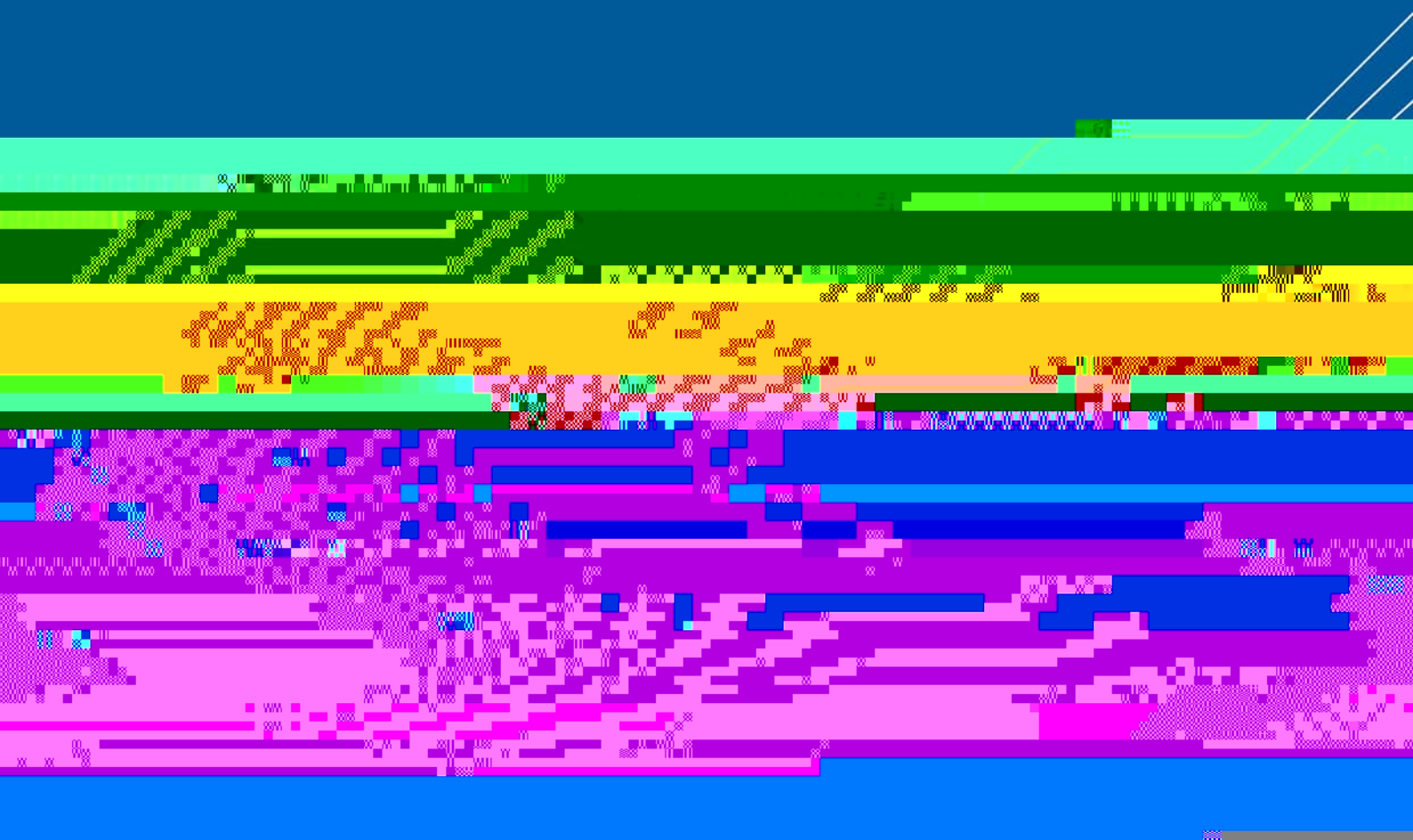


Guidelines for the Postdoc Phase within the Helmholtz Association

Working Group Postdoc Guidelinesⁱ

adopted by the Assembly of Members of the
Helmholtz Association on April 18, 2018



PREAMBLE

Through their research, postdocs in the Helmholtz Association make significant contributions to solving the grand challenges facing science, society, and the economy. Their achievements are central to the scientific success of the Helmholtz Association.

The present guidelines are based on the mission of the Helmholtz Association and were put together jointly by the Helmholtz Centers to outline common quality standards for the postdoc phase. The Helmholtz Centers share the understanding that the period after receiving a doctoral degree is key to a researcher's career development. The centers aim to offer postdoctoral scientists an outstanding scientific environment to carry out their research and to further their skills, as well as supporting them in making decisions about their future careers. Helmholtz Centers aim to particularly encourage excellent female scientists to continue to pursue scientific careers.

DEFINITION AND ELEMENTS OF THE POSTDOC PHASE

Definition

The postdoc phase is the stage of a researcher's career that follows their doctoral degree. During this time, researchers further expand their skills and experience for a limited period of time in order to strengthen their scientific profile, and to identify and prepare for their future career paths within or outside of academia.

In the context of their doctorate, postdocs have already proven that they have a thorough and systematic understanding of their research area and have made an independent contribution to science. The postdoc phase primarily provides researchers with the opportunity to expand on these skills by conducting independent research, developing their own research agenda and, if applicable, acquiring funding. Moreover, postdoctoral researchers are expected to demonstrate the ability to make important contributions to science, expand their networks, and gain clarity as to what professional objectives they consider desirable and achievable. Finally, they are expected to develop interdisciplinary skills that are crucial for careers both within and outside academia.

