

3-Year PhD Fellowship



at the Institute of Biochemistry, Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin

Start: 1 December 2026

We offer a 3-year PhD position to investigate intracellular lipid transfer in human cells and uncover how lipid concentration gradients impact cellular signaling. The project combines protein–lipid photocrosslinking, mass spectrometry and fluorescence microscopy to identify and characterize the proteins driving this transport machinery.

You will join the junior research group led by Carla Kirschbaum at the Institute of Biochemistry on the Charité Campus Berlin Mitte, where you will benefit from a collaborative research environment with integration into institute-wide activities and scientific exchange across research groups.

You will obtain a 3-year PhD fellowship funded by the *Fonds der Chemischen Industrie*, which includes a personal budget for equipment and travel. For terms and conditions of the fellowship, please refer to the **appendix**.

You will perform

- Liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry and native mass spectrometry for lipid and protein analysis
- Handling of synthetic lipid probes, photocrosslinking and click reaction in cells
- Tissue culture of human cell lines, protein expression and purification
- Fluorescence microscopy at the Advanced Medical BIOimaging Core Facility
- Scientific presentations at institute seminars and (inter-)national conferences

Prerequisites

- Master's degree in (Bio-)Chemistry or related subjects (awarded before the start date)
- Interest in the following topics: membrane biology, protein–lipid interactions, chemical crosslinking, mass spectrometry
- Experience with any of the above-listed techniques is desirable but not mandatory
- The selected candidate will have to write a project description before the fellowship can be officially granted (see **appendix**)

Application documents

- Motivation letter stating your study subject, interests and research experience (1 page)
- CV, including publications if any (max. 2 pages)
- Master's certificate or current transcript of records

Please send your application (in English or German) or any related questions to:

carla.kirschbaum@charite.de

Application deadline: 30 August 2026

Annex to the Liebig Fellowship Guidelines:

PhD Fellowship for Liebig Fellowship beneficiaries to finance 1 scientific staff - to build up a group of young investigators

Prerequisites:

- ▶ The Liebig Fellowship beneficiary selects 1 staff member whom he/she thinks suitable and wants to present to Stiftung Stipendien-Fonds as a potential PhD candidate.
- ▶ This staff member must have completed university studies of **chemistry** or related fields and qualify for admission to a PhD degree.
- ▶ Generally, this application should be made latest 6 months after the start of the work on the PhD thesis.
- ▶ The PhD Fellowship cannot be split between several staff members.

Benefits of the PhD Fellowship / Conditions:

- ▶ The PhD Fellowship beneficiary receives monthly payments of 1,850 EUR (see page 2). To support the compatibility of family and career in science, an additional monthly lump sum of 100 EUR per child is granted. This lump sum is paid to supported parents upon presentation of the child's birth certificate.
- ▶ Reimbursement of expenses up to EUR 1,000 per year against presentation of receipts for scientific literature, computers including accessories and participation in scientific conferences that are directly related to the work on the PhD thesis.
- ▶ The Fellowship runs for 3 years.
- ▶ It would be an advantage if the supported person were involved in teaching activities (e.g. 2 hours/week during the semester).
- ▶ The beneficiary undertakes to accept funding from only one institution (prohibition of double funding) and to devote his/her research work primarily and regularly to the academic activity funded by this scholarship. Additional employment of up to a quarter of a position in the area of research and teaching at a university or non-university research institution or a maximum of 5 hours per week in all other areas is permitted.
- ▶ Furthermore, the beneficiary undertakes to immediately notify Stiftung Stipendien-Fonds of any changes which affect the requirements for / conditions of the PhD Fellowship or of any facts which are significant to the implementation of this Fellowship. This applies generally and, in particular, to any reason which prevents the beneficiary from performing in person the funded work. The only exceptions from this notification requirement are absence of less than three weeks due to illness and vacation-related absence.
- ▶ Stiftung Stipendien-Fonds reserves the right to withdraw or suspend the PhD Fellowship if there are important reasons damaging the reputation of the Fellowship or if the beneficiary does not fulfil his/her obligations arising under this Fellowship. In cases where the Fellowship is withdrawn, Stiftung Stipendien-Fonds can demand the beneficiary to pay back (partly or in full) the funds already received within the PhD-Fellowship - applying the principle of proportionality and considering all the circumstances in the individual case.

The application is submitted via the [funding portal](#) via the supervising Liebig fellowship recipient:

- Completed personal data application form
- CV in tabular form, list of publications (if applicable)
- Letter of recommendation by the Liebig Fellowship beneficiary
- Subject of and work plan for the PhD thesis - to be elaborated by the PhD candidate
 - » summary and objectives (1 page)
 - » introduction with citations / status of research, planned experiments (5-7 pages)
 - » time schedule (spreadsheet, 1 page)
 - » bibliography
- Certificate of university degree with individual grades (bachelor and master or equivalent)
- If applicable: Birth certificate(s) of the child/children of the PhD candidate

Please note that applications can be considered only after all required documents for the PhD Fellowship have been submitted via the funding portal.

Applications for a PhD Fellowship can be made at any time after the award of the Liebig Fellowship.

According to § 3 item 44 of the German Income Tax Law, fellowships from non-profit organizations such as Stiftung Stipendien-Fonds des Verbandes der Chemischen Industrie are income-tax free on the following conditions:

- a. The fellowships do not exceed the amounts necessary to perform a research task or to cover living expenses and the need for professional training, and the fellowships are awarded according to relevant guidelines of the donor;
- b. Beneficiaries of fellowships are not obliged to render any specific scientific or artistic service in return or to perform work as employees.

On the use of generative models in the application

Applicants must disclose whether and which generative models they have used, for what purpose and to what extent when submitting an application. They must ensure that the use of generative models does not infringe third-party intellectual property and does not result in scientific misconduct, e.g. in the form of plagiarism. The use of generative models when applying will generally be assessed neither positively nor negatively.

Data Protection Rules of Fonds der Chemischen Industrie

Applications for funding or prizes of Fonds der Chemischen Industrie im Verband der Chemischen Industrie e.V. (chemical industry fund within the German chemical industry association VCI)

By submitting personal data in connection with an application for funds or prizes of Fonds der Chemischen Industrie im Verband der Chemischen Industrie e.V., you consent to the electronic processing and storage of the data you have provided. This is done for the organizational processing of the funding procedures/award procedures and for communication on events of Fonds der Chemischen Industrie and the foundation Stiftung Stipendien-Fonds.

Furthermore, you agree to your name being published in the context of press releases about the granting of funds / award of prizes. Your data will be stored until you withdraw your consent by stating this withdrawal to us. Where we are under a legal obligation to store your data, these data will be deleted after expiry of the legally required record-keeping period. In the context of the approval procedure for funding or an award ceremony, your data will be passed on to third parties (reviewers) for the purpose of processing.

The full version of our data protection rules (in German language) is available [here](#).

STIFTUNG STIPENDIEN-FONDS
DES VERBANDES DER CHEMISCHEN INDUSTRIE e. V.

Thomas Wessel
Vorsitzender des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats
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