

Helmholtz Association Postdoc Network (HAPN)

We'll make it HAPN!

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Representing the following 13 Helmholtz Centers but designed to connect all 18 Helmholtz Centers in the future:

- (1) AWI PostDoc Team
- (2) GEOMAR Postdoc+ Team
- (3) Helmholtz Munich Postdoc Association
- (4) Postdoc Representatives DZNE/Bonn
- (5) PostDoc Network (PDN) DKFZ
- (6) HZDR Postdoc Representatives (short: Postdoc Reps)
- (7) HZI Postdoc Network (in foundation)
- (8) FZJ Postdoc Community
- (9) GFZ PostDoc Representatives
- (10) Postdocs of the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research
- (11) MDC Postdoc Association
- (12) DESY Postdoc (Zeuthen Campus)
- (13) Postdoc Representatives of the KIT Campus Alpin - IMK-IFU (Garmisch Partenkirchen)

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Introduction

Postdoctoral researchers are an indispensable pillar within Germany's research landscape, contributing significantly to the nation's scientific accomplishments and serving as pivotal catalysts for innovation in science. Yet, they face numerous challenges given their insecure contractual situation, unclear career perspectives, the lack of postdoc representation and community as well as appreciation for their contributions. On the other hand, voices that establish a growing 'postdoc crisis' become ever more frequent: Research institutions in Germany and elsewhere struggle to attract highly qualified researchers and in the future may not be able to compete with other employment sectors. Hence, it is high time that research institutions pay more attention to this group, understand their needs, and improve their well-being.

The Helmholtz Association guidelines define the postdoc phase as 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 prepare for their future career paths within or outside of academia.

While other non-university research institutions such as the Max Planck Society and the Leibniz Association have well-established networks that represent and support postdoctoral researchers, foster synergies, and close exchange with both their headquarters as well as other stakeholders, a comparable network is notably absent within the Helmholtz Association.

In response to this gap, we – postdoc teams, associations, and representatives of diverse Helmholtz Centers – are embarking on a mission to establish a comprehensive **Helmholtz Association Postdoc Network (HAPN)**, which will unite postdoctoral researchers across 18 Helmholtz Centers to address challenges posed by the current dynamic situation. Our joint aim is to strengthen Helmholtz postdocs, recognizing that their contribution is pivotal not just for individual career development but also for the overall prosperity of the Helmholtz Association.

Despite the presence of excellent Career Centers and individual measures within and across some Helmholtz Centers, a notable gap exists in representation and discourse opportunities for postdocs. This deficit hampers the collective ability to agree on positions and find a united voice on current topics that could benefit all Helmholtz Centers. The distinct advantage of our initiative lies in its potential to bridge this gap, providing a platform for postdocs to engage in meaningful discussions, share experiences, and collectively shape their future within the Helmholtz community. Through HAPN, we aim to create a robust framework that enhances collaboration, fosters mutual support, and empowers postdoctoral researchers to contribute significantly to the continued success of the Helmholtz Association.

Preliminary Steps Towards a Helmholtz Postdoc Network

The proposal is the result of various steps towards collaboration among different Helmholtz representatives/teams and joint endeavors with other German postdoc networks in 2023. As a result of this collaborative process and the current momentum, we can ensure that the HAPN proposal reflects a wide support base for the establishment of a Helmholtz postdoc network.

2023 Timeline

“Time to join forces: Networking Event for Postdoc Communities & Associations at the Helmholtz Centers”	
March 8 th 2023	<p>First networking event initiated by Dr. Neele Meyer, Dr. Mariana Schulte-Sasse and Dr. Andrea Bosten to bring postdoc representatives/teams from different centers together.</p> <p>In total, representatives from 12 Helmholtz Centers joined.</p> <p>Invited speaker: Dr. Yu-Xuan Lu (Max Planck Institute for Biology of Aging), one of the founders of the Max Planck PostdocNet.</p>
Statements of German Postdoc Networks on the WissZeitVG Revision	
March 29 th & July 4 th 2023	<p>Together with the Max Planck PostdocNet, the Leibniz PostDoc Network and other German networks, postdoc representatives/teams of different Helmholtz Centers issued the “Joint Statement from German Postdoctoral Networks on the Eckpunktepapier from the BMBF” on 17.03.2023 (accessible on the Max Planck PostdocNet website).</p> <p>In June 2023, these networks were invited by the BMBF to comment on the Draft Bill for the WissZeitVG. The statement is accessible on the Max Planck PostdocNet website.</p>
Result release of the 2022 AWI-GEOMAR-GFZ Postdoc Survey	
Spring 2023	<p>Postdoc representative teams of three Helmholtz Centers organized and published a joint survey conducted in winter 2022, aiming to collect information on the needs and difficulties of postdoctoral researchers at the three centers. Preliminary results of the survey have been shared with interested departments within the centers.</p>
2nd Meeting of Helmholtz Postdoc Representatives/Teams	
May 5 th 2023	<p>During this meeting, we agreed on the goals and activities of a future network.</p> <p>Helmholtz Juniors (HeJus) representatives Johannes Krämer and Nagesh Jagtap joined this meeting to share information about the organizational structure and activities of the HeJus.</p> <p>Following this meeting, Dr. Neele Meyer, Dr. Mariana Schulte-Sasse and Dr. Andrea Bosten discussed the potential of a Helmholtz Postdoc Network with Anna Tschaut.</p>
Exchange between the Presidents and Early Career Researcher (ECR) representatives of MPG and HGF in Berlin	
May 25 th 2023	<p>Helmholtz postdocs Dr. Jasmin Groß & Dr. Heike Prokoph joined the event in Berlin.</p> <p>Following this meeting, the “Touchstones for a Successful Law on Temporary Scientific Contracts (Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz)” document was compiled.</p>
Survey for Postdoc Representatives/Teams at Helmholtz Centers	
Summer 2023	<p>The survey aimed to establish the status quo of how postdocs are currently organized at different Helmholtz Centers. Postdocs from 12 centers participated in the survey. Based on contact data from the survey, a mailing list was created to facilitate communication among Helmholtz postdoc representatives/teams and other German postdoc networks.</p>
Panel Discussion with Dr. Jens Brandenburg (BMBF): Postdocs in Germany-Challenges, Opportunities, and Perspectives	
October 23 rd 2023	<p>Originally planned as part of Postdoc Appreciation Week, Dr. Jasmin Groß and postdoc representatives from the Technical University of Munich, the Max Planck PostdocNet and the Leibniz PostDoc Network talked about postdoc challenges and perspectives with Dr. Jens Brandenburg in an English-speaking virtual panel discussion hosted by Dr. Neele Meyer. The event had ~180 participants.</p>
Autumn 2023	Finalization of the HAPN Proposal

Results from the Survey among Helmholtz Postdoc Representatives/Teams

The survey, launched in Summer 2023, was disseminated to postdoc representatives/teams across most Helmholtz Centers. This marked the inaugural effort to comprehensively grasp the diverse landscape of postdoc representation across different centers, recognizing its pivotal role in shaping communication and collaboration opportunities. Among the participating center, variations were observed. While some centers elect postdocs representatives with experience and have established working groups, postdocs at other centers currently lack representation. To date (December 2023), representatives or teams from 12 Helmholtz Centers participated in the survey, revealing noteworthy insights. Results showed that 11 out of these 12 centers have postdoc representatives or teams in place. Six centers employ an election process to appoint postdoc representatives, while others foster bottom-up community groups.

Half of the respondents affirmed that their center adheres to the Helmholtz Postdoc Guidelines and is committed to employing postdocs at salary level E13.3 or above – a practice observed in certain Helmholtz Centers and all Max Planck Institutes. However, there remains a lack of standardized data within the Helmholtz Association. Communication efforts of most postdoc representatives/teams are commendable, yet merely half have established visibility through websites or social media channels. In order to bridge this gap, a notable recent development is the establishment of a mailing list for Helmholtz postdoc representatives/teams to foster collaboration.

The absence of a clear definition and varying degrees of representation hinder effective collaboration and resource allocation to address postdocs' needs and interests within the Helmholtz Association. Consequently, it is not surprising that 9 out of 12 survey respondents rated the importance of establishing a Helmholtz-wide postdoc network as 10 out of 10 to meet the needs and interests of postdocs within the Helmholtz Association.

This is precisely where HAPN strived to make a transformative impact: The palpable enthusiasm for this initiative underscores its significance, with the establishment of a network viewed as a crucial step toward fostering collaboration, standardizing support mechanisms, and enhancing the overall postdoc experience within the Helmholtz Association. The initiative has garnered widespread support from the majority of postdoc representatives/teams who all recognize a strong need, mutual benefit, and momentum in joining forces to create a sustainable Helmholtz-wide postdoc network.

With this proposal, we aim to bring this vision to fruition by outlining the goals, planned activities, and governance structure of HAPN, which we plan to launch in spring 2024. Central funding by the Helmholtz Head Office, coupled with support from individual centers, is deemed crucial for building this network in a sustainable manner. We are convinced that HAPN will not only strengthen the resilience of this crucial group in the German research community but will also rectify the existing imbalance in terms of postdoc representation among non-university research institutions.

Vision

Our vision is to consolidate a collaborative and interconnected network that brings together postdocs from diverse disciplines across all Helmholtz Centers and thereby deepens the already established collaborations. By facilitating open communication and cultivating a sense of community, **our goal is to create a platform that thrives on knowledge exchange, ignites innovative collaboration, and fosters interdisciplinary synergy.**

Our vision extends beyond individual research centers by forming a **direct communication channel with the Helmholtz Head Office.** Through this linkage, we seek to align our initiative

with the overarching goals of the Helmholtz Association, contributing to the broader scientific vision and strategic direction.

Last but certainly not least, we recognize the significance of improving working conditions for postdocs to ensure that this group of employees can enjoy **a high standard of support and transparent employment rules across all Helmholtz Centers**. We are convinced that this is essential for all research institutions to be able to compete for the best talents in the current market and the Helmholtz Centers' ability to attract postdocs in the future. Our commitment is to advocate for and actively promote coherent standards across all Helmholtz Centers. HAPN will engage with stakeholders and key decision-makers at individual centers, the Helmholtz Head Office, and other relevant organizations, thereby creating an empowering environment for postdocs that transcends institutional boundaries.

Strategic Goals

HAPN marks the start of a transformative journey. Our endeavor to realize the vision described above is guided by three strategic long-term goals that underscore our dedication. To ensure the sustainability of HAPN, the fruition of our vision, and the achievement of our long-term strategic goals, we planned specific activities for each goal.

1 | Promote Collaboration and Networking

The first long-term goal focuses on cultivating a vibrant and interconnected community of postdocs within the Helmholtz Association. HAPN will be open to all Helmholtz postdocs to foster community and interaction via different channels.

We will achieve this through dedicated activities, such as organizing regular Helmholtz Postdoc Days, cooperating with other networks such as the HeJus, launching networking channels, establishing a budget plan for HAPN activities, and emphasizing the potential of (extra-)scientific contributions. By facilitating collaboration and networking, we aim to stimulate innovation and knowledge sharing and to foster a sense of belonging within the Helmholtz postdoc community.

2 | Enhance Postdoc Experience and Support

The second long-term goal revolves around improving the overall experience of Helmholtz postdocs, safeguarding their well-being and professional development, and enhancing their working conditions to ensure that they can live up to their full scientific potential and provide impactful contributions to their respective discipline and Helmholtz Center. Key components include the implementation of statutes for HAPN, transparent salary structures, attractive working environments, and long-term perspectives. This commitment aligns with the Helmholtz Association's dedication to nurturing talent and providing a supportive environment for ECRs.

3 | Advocate for Administrative and Operational Optimization

The third long-term goal focuses on advocating for streamlined administrative processes and practices, making them more efficient, compliant with regulations, and aligned with organizational objectives. Key strategies include establishing direct communication channels with the Helmholtz Head Office and advocating for the implementation of standardized time recording practices and clear regulations for mobile working. Through these efforts, we aim to optimize administrative and operational efficiency, thereby reducing Helmholtz's administrative burdens and redirecting resources to support its mission and the postdoc community effectively.

By embracing these long-term goals, the Helmholtz Association is poised to not only sustain but elevate research leadership. This approach will contribute to the creation of a nurturing

environment that empowers the next generation of scientific leaders and positions the Helmholtz Association as a beacon for innovative research and professional development.

Planned Activities

The planned activities (PAs) within HAPN are designed to align with our strategic long-term goals, and they are categorized accordingly. A comprehensive overview of the planned timeline, delineating HAPN's 10-year perspective for initiating these activities, is provided on page 12 and illustrated in Figure 1. The execution of these activities will be overseen by three distinctive Working Groups, each intricately detailed in the "Organization and Governance Structure" section for a more comprehensive understanding.

1) Promote Collaboration and Networking

The planned activities outlined for the first long-term goal collectively strive to foster a culture of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and community building among Helmholtz postdocs. These initiatives aim to create an environment where postdocs can connect, exchange ideas, and support one another.

PA1.1 Organize a HAPN Kick-off Event

Goal: Officially launch the network with a celebratory inauguration event

Tasks: 1) Organize a celebratory kick-off event; 2) Invite representatives from the Helmholtz Head Office and each Center; 3) Elect the steering committee; 4) Launch the three working groups to put them in touch with relevant representatives of the Helmholtz Head Office; and 5) reach postdoc (career) centers.

PA1.2 Launch a networking platform for all Helmholtz postdocs

Goal: Foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among postdocs across Helmholtz Centers.

Tasks: 1) Develop and launch easy-to-join networking channels, for example, mailing lists, cloud storage, podcasts, forums, blogs, or virtual events; 2) Promote the channels to all postdocs and encourage them to get more involved; and 3) Monitor the platforms' effectiveness and make improvements as needed.

PA1.3 Plan and host regular HAPN Postdoc Days

Goal: Facilitate a vibrant and enriching environment for all interested postdocs that encourages networking, knowledge sharing, and personal and professional development.

Tasks 1) Develop a comprehensive plan for the "HAPN Postdoc Days" and organize them regularly for all Helmholtz postdocs; 2) Ensure that the events' themes and discussions align with the Helmholtz Association's overall research and development objectives, supporting postdocs in contributing to the organization's mission; 3) Create effective marketing strategies to promote the event, encouraging high participation from postdocs across all Helmholtz Centers; 4) Ensure that the event's agenda includes opportunities for postdocs to interact, exchange ideas, and share their research or experience; 5) Collect feedback from attendees to assess the event's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement; and 6) Make necessary adjustments for future iterations.

PA1.4 Organize Get-Together Nights during (Inter-)national Conferences

Goal: Support the networking of Helmholtz postdocs in similar disciplines

Tasks: 1) Identify conferences that current postdocs and Helmholtz alumni from multiple centers attend (e.g., EGU, UN Ocean Science Decade); 2) Provide access to communication

channels to organize a Helmholtz postdoc catch-up; and 3) Follow up if this type of networking event is valuable to the postdoc community.

PA1.5 Organize annual in-person meetings for the HAPN steering committee

Goal: Support effective communication among HAPN steering committee members

Tasks: 1) Locate a host center for each in-person meeting; 2) Set an agenda for the meeting that allows sustainable, future planning for HAPN as well as training and networking of committee members; and 3) Review agenda effectiveness and act accordingly.

PA1.6 Establish a budget plan for HAPN

Goal: Efficiently manage HAPN's finances to support the planned activities.

Tasks: Develop a budget plan for HAPN based on internal Helmholtz Funding, for i) the networking channels; ii) HAPN events like the Kick-off Meeting or the HAPN Postdoc Days; iii) travel costs for steering committee members to relevant meetings; and iv) relevant training opportunities for the steering committee and working group members.

2) Enhance Postdoc Experience and Support

The activities described for the second long-term goal collectively aim to enhance the postdoc experience, ensure equitable compensation, support work-life balance, provide advice for permanent employment paths, and establish clear guidelines and expectations for all Helmholtz postdocs. HAPN is committed to fostering a supportive and nurturing environment for its ECRs.

PA2.1 Establish statutes for HAPN

Goal: Develop comprehensive, clear postdoc guidelines and procedures for HAPN building on the Helmholtz Association's postdoc guidelines.

Tasks: 1) Develop HAPN statutes; 2) Communicate and ensure understanding of the statutes among postdocs; 3) Create a mechanism for regular updates and revisions; and 4) Advocate for incentives such as contract extensions for volunteer postdocs on the HAPN Steering Committee (similar to practices for PhD candidates who volunteer for the HeJus).

PA2.2 Carry out biennial Helmholtz-wide postdoc surveys

Goal: Gather insights and feedback from postdocs to establish the status quo and improve their experience and support.

Tasks: 1) Develop and administer a comprehensive biennial postdoc survey, which can be aligned with the HeJus's survey; 2) Analyze survey results and identify key areas for improvement; 3) Communicate survey results first to the Helmholtz Head Office and the centers, and then to all Helmholtz postdocs and beyond; and 4) Suggest measures to improve potential challenges.

PA2.3 Host career events – “Academic Pathways” & “Non-Academic Pathways”

Goal: Provide events for active career planning.

Tasks: 1) Communicate regularly with each Career or Postdoc Center to inquire about the availability of relevant career events with the potential for Helmholtz-wide postdoc participation; alternatively, 2) Invite Helmholtz alumni who were successful in securing academic and non-academic positions after their postdoctoral phase to share their experiences; 3) Organize the events on a suitable online collaboration platform; and 4) Improve the event structure based on post-event feedback.

PA2.4 Advocate for common postdoc employment conditions at all Helmholtz Centers

Goals: Advocate for equitable compensation, fair and transparent leave procedures, and flexible support for all institutional and non-institutional employees (e.g. scholarship holders), especially those with care responsibilities.

Tasks:

Example I - Standard Compensation: 1) Compile current handling information from all Helmholtz Centers; 2) Advocate for the review and adjustment of salary standards to E13.3 or above for all incoming postdocs; and 3) Communicate standards and rationale to all Helmholtz Centers.

Example II - Contract extensions: 1) Compile current handling information from all Helmholtz Centers; 2) Advocate for a contract extension framework based on hours, not months for care responsibilities; 3) Advocate for the review and adjustment of contract extensions; and 4) Ensure clear communication and support for affected postdocs.

Example III - Scholarship holders: 1) Collect contract regulation issues of scholarship holders; 2) Review challenges and best practice examples; 3) Provide support and facilitate exchange of experiences for scholarship holders; and 4) Work together with other postdoc networks to advocate beyond the Helmholtz Association.

3) Advocate for Administrative and Operational Optimization

The activities outlined in the third long-term goal collectively seek to advocate for streamlining and enhancing the administrative and operational processes for Helmholtz postdocs. These initiatives are designed to increase efficiency, compliance with internal and external regulations, and alignment with organizational objectives. HAPN is dedicated to creating an environment for postdocs where administrative and operational processes are as efficient as possible, allowing time and resources to be redirected to support the Helmholtz mission and the researchers it serves.

PA3.1 Establish regular communication with the Helmholtz Head Office

Goal: Ensure efficient and clear communication with the Helmholtz Head Office for mutual exchange, better coordination and information sharing.

Tasks: 1) Develop a communication protocol; 2) Establish regular meetings or updates with the Helmholtz Head Office; 3) Enhance the flow of information and feedback between centers and the Head Office for postdoc topics; and 4) Advocate further funded initiatives such as the Career Centers or individual measures to ensure the support for early-career researchers at the centers continues to be state-of-the-art.

PA3.2 Suggest a Helmholtz-wide recording system for (extra-)scientific contributions and impact

Goal: Capture and recognize the contributions and impact of postdocs within and beyond the Helmholtz Association.

Tasks 1) Gain an overview of how (extra)scientific contributions are currently recorded within the Helmholtz Association; 2) Suggest a unified system for recording scientific contributions and impact such as peer-reviewed journal articles and books as well as extra-scientific contributions and impact such as teaching and public outreach; 3) Promote and encourage postdocs to record their contributions in the system; and 4) Advocate for the use of the data for recognition and decision-making at the Helmholtz Head Office and individual centers.

PA3.3 Contribute to permanent employment path models for postdocs in accordance with the revised WissZeitVG

Goal: In case the WissZeitVG revision will be implemented as suggested in the latest draft bill (4+2 years), HAPN aims to participate in discussions about adapting permanent employment path models for postdocs at Helmholtz Centers

Tasks: 1) Understand the current situation and best practice examples (e.g. *Nachwuchs und Mittelbauausschuss*, short NMA, at DKFZ) at different centers; 2) Invite stakeholders within the Helmholtz Association to join round tables; 3) Suggest permanent employment path models that aligns with the revised WissZeitVG; 4) Communicate the new processes to postdocs and create awareness; and 5) Monitor the success of the permanent employment path models via the postdoc survey.

PA3.4 Advocate for common administrative practices at all Helmholtz Centers

Goal: Ensure streamlined and employee-friendly administrative practices for postdocs at all Helmholtz Centers and beyond.

Tasks:

Example I - Mobile Working outside of Germany: 1) Gather information from Helmholtz Centers that have trialed mobile working outside of Germany; 2) Identify issues and best practice examples; and 3) Advocate for the establishment of Helmholtz-wide regulations in compliance with German, EU, and international regulations.

Example II - Time Recording: 1) Advocate for common time recording practices following EU regulations; 2) Identify best practice examples; and 3) Regularly follow up with postdocs on issues arising due to the time recording practices.

Organization and Governance Structure

To ensure that the HAPN will be a sustainable network that is viable in the long term despite the dynamic situation of postdocs, we will establish the following organizational and governance structures.

HAPN Steering Committee

The HAPN steering committee will be structured to ensure equal rights and foster contributions of every Helmholtz Center, addressing the diverse concerns of Helmholtz postdocs. Our vision for the steering committee entails the inclusion of one representative from each Helmholtz Center. Postdocs interested in actively participating in HAPN are welcome to join one of the three working groups (WGs). Representatives will be elected by their fellow postdocs for a one-year term, although the specifics of this process may be adapted as needed and detailed in the HAPN statutes.

To ensure inclusivity and diversity, each Helmholtz Center will be encouraged to nominate candidates for the election process, keeping in mind the principle of balanced representation. This process will empower committee members with the authority to make well-informed decisions on behalf of all Helmholtz postdocs and will ensure a smooth integration into the Helmholtz structure. The steering committee will hold regular virtual meetings, complemented by one or two in-person gatherings per year, facilitating effective communication and collaboration.

Each steering committee member will play a vital role in one of the three proposed working groups, hence consisting of six steering committee members each if representatives from all 18 centers join HAPN. Each working group will select a spokesperson, and these three spokespersons will collectively form HAPN's leadership team. The leadership team will serve as the central point of contact for the Helmholtz Head Office, the Helmholtz postdoc representatives/teams, the Helmholtz Career/Postdoc Centers, other ECR networks, and the general public. By designating three spokespersons in HAPN's leadership team, an equitable workload distribution will be ensured, and consistent leadership throughout each tenure period will be maintained. Further details will be established by working group 1 (defined below) in the HAPN statutes.

Working Groups

Each WG will be comprised of six steering committee members and an unlimited number of volunteer postdocs from all Helmholtz Centers. Volunteer postdocs will be invited to regular online meetings as well as the in-person meeting/s of the steering committee. Regular meetings of all working group members will ensure communication among the three WGs.

WG1: Postdoc Communication

This WG aims to ensure high-quality communication within and beyond HAPN. WG1 is specifically in charge of the establishment of communication channels for Helmholtz postdocs (**PA1.2**) and the statutes for HAPN (**PA2.1**). This WG will also plan and carry out the Helmholtz-wide postdoc survey (**PA2.2**). This group will regularly inform the Helmholtz postdoc community of HAPN's planned activities, milestones of other WGs and updates from the Helmholtz Head Office (**PA3.1**) and individual centers. These updates will also be communicated to the Helmholtz postdoc community, other postdoc networks, the HeJus and beyond through the established channels. WG2 and WG3 will regularly update this group. WG1 will also regularly inform the public of interesting news/activities in the community through social media channels (e.g. Bluesky, Instagram, LinkedIn, X, or others).

WG2: Postdoc Networking

This WG is in charge of organizing networking events, including a kick-off event (**PA1.1**), the HAPN Postdoc Days (**PA1.3**), get-together nights during (inter)national conferences (**PA1.4**), host career events (**PA2.3**) and the in-person meeting/s of the HAPN steering committee and all other WG members (**PA1.5**). Annual in-person meetings with the Helmholtz Head Office (**PA3.1**) will also be organized by this WG. Because the HAPN Postdoc Days and the HAPN steering committee meetings will be two of the largest parts of the requested budget, WG2 is also in charge of the development of the budget scheme (**PA1.6**). This WG interacts primarily with WG1 but also with WG3 to coordinate contributions of each WG to the planned events and meetings and request input on the budget scheme.

WG3: Postdoc Perspectives

This WG is in charge of advocating for the optimization of processes which create and clarify perspective for postdocs within the Helmholtz Association. WG3's focus mainly includes advising on permanent employment path models within the Helmholtz Association (**PA3.3**), promoting a Helmholtz-wide recording system for (extra-) scientific contributions and impact (**PA3.2**), and advocating for coherent working conditions and administrative practices for postdocs at all Helmholtz Centers (**PA2.4**, **PA3.4**).

With the detailed organizational structure, as depicted in Figure 1, and the strategic allocation of long-term plans among WGs, as outlined in the timeline on page 12, our aim is to establish

a framework that fosters efficient and impactful networking among postdocs across all Helmholtz centers. This structure is designed to not only meet the current needs of the Helmholtz postdoc community but also to pave a robust and productive career path for all ECRs who will become part of the Helmholtz community in the future.

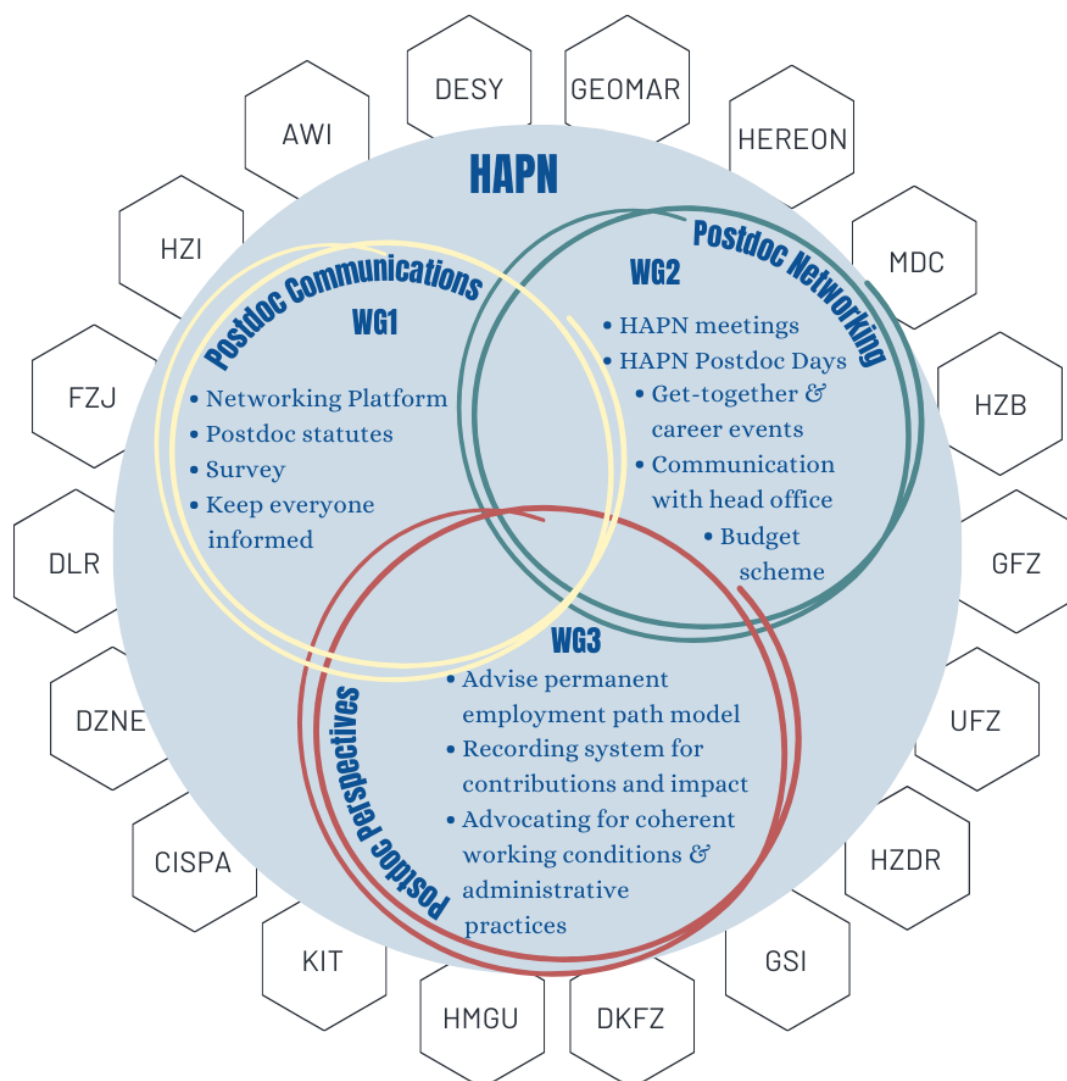


Figure 1: Structure of HAPN including the three working groups and highlighted desired contribution of all 18 Helmholtz Centers.

Budget

For the successful launch and ongoing activities of HAPN as outlined in previous sections, we propose to allocate a budget sourced from the Helmholtz Head Office. We are open to feedback from the Head Office in the initial phase. The specifics of this budget will be detailed in a comprehensive plan, which we can provide upon request.

In line with the practice established by the HeJus, we anticipate that individual Helmholtz Centers will contribute by covering travel expenses for events associated with HAPN. We are committed to making the most efficient use of resources and will explore opportunities to synergize with the HeJus and other relevant groups within the Helmholtz Association.

Our approach to managing HAPN's finances is focused on ensuring that the funds are utilized effectively to support our planned activities. These include, but are not limited to, maintaining robust networking channels, organizing events such as the HAPN Postdoc Days and the Kick-off Meeting, and providing relevant training opportunities for both the steering committee and WG members.

Timeline

This timeline provides a general road map for the three WGs, with specific objectives and activities spread out over 10 years. It is essential to regularly review progress, adapt as needed, and remain flexible in response to changing circumstances or emerging opportunities. To ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of our initiatives, we plan to conduct a comprehensive evaluation after 5 years. This assessment will allow us to make necessary adjustments and align our efforts with the current landscape and future objectives.

