

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3



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# Career guide for postdocs



## Individual career development plan for postdocs at the beginning of their project

Whether you are aiming for an academic career or a non-academic career: to develop defined goals and planning to achieve them are an important basis for the development of a career path that suits you. The purpose of this guide-

line is to help you to plan for your own career development in good time. The career plan developed in this process can be a starting point for further discussions and conversations with your mentors and colleagues.

### Steps on the way to an individual career plan

- Fill in the individual career plan. Add your own thoughts.
- Discuss the development plan with your mentors and implement it. Evaluate and adjust the plan regularly if necessary.



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On JUNO's websites you will find numerous articles and background information on various career paths. A collection of blog posts and field reports by young scientists provides insight into career choices and opportunities.

[www.juno.hhu.de/en/articlesandreports](http://www.juno.hhu.de/en/articlesandreports)

It might be helpful to discuss the career plan with your mentors.

1. What is my motivation for the current postdoc?

Motivation

2. When has my postdoc phase been successful?

Success factors

3. What are my long-term career goals? What are the arguments in favor?  
What arguments/facts speak against it?

Career aspirations	Pros – driving factors	Cons – hindering factors
1)		

Career aspirations	Pros – driving factors	Cons – hindering factors
2)		
...		

4. What are the milestones (e.g. third-party funding application, continuing education, conference attendance, publication, research collaboration) to achieve the career goal mentioned? Is it possible to pursue the goal with several strategies? Does this leave several career options open in the long term?

• Milestones towards achieving goal 1

a)	Goal 1
b)	
c)	
...	

• Milestones towards achieving goal 2

a)	Goal 2
b)	
c)	
...	

5. What competencies will I bring to the new working group?  
Which competencies do I particularly like to use?

Competencies



Develop your own competences as a researcher with ResearchComp

ResearchComp enables researchers to assess & (further) develop their own interdisciplinary skills. The tool supports one's own competence training and profile building.

[More Information & Download](#)

6. Which new working areas, techniques, skills (e.g., application writing, external collaboration, supervision of students and doctoral students, teaching) would I like to learn/develop in the next six months? Why or with what goal?

[illegible]

7. What kind of support exists at HHU or in general for the achievement of the objectives (e.g. JUNO workshops and course attendance, career advice, further education in the field of university didactics, ....)? Specify with date.

8. My action plan for the coming year (e.g. activities supporting the achievement of the objectives above). As specific and concrete as possible.

! If necessary, develop an action plan together with your mentor(s).

Action Plan



(approx. one year after starting the postdoc or annually)

with yourself and the goals you have set for yourself. Remember to also reflect on your career plan in exchange with your mentor(s) and analyse it with regard to feasibility.



3. How have I personally developed and what has contributed to it?

Development

4. Have my research work and related activities (see 1.) been balanced?

Balance

5. Which experiences were particularly important with regard to my personal career development?

Experiences

6. How do I rate my possible career options (see Phase 1, questions 3 + 4) at the current time?  
Which career goal is realistic? Which career goal do I adhere to? (Set a specific date to make the appropriate decision!)

Evaluation

7. If I am pursuing an academic career: are the academic achievements and experience gained sufficient for such a career? By when should I be clear about it?

Decision criteria

8. How much time do I have to achieve the current qualification goal in contractual terms and/or with regard to the legal frame work for contracts of researchers in Germany (WissZeitVG)?

Timing

! Please contact HHU Department D3.1  
»Scientific staff« to have your fixed-term  
periods calculated.



## The career decision

It is time to make a decision regarding a fixed career goal. This decision is difficult, depends on many factors and takes time. Even if you

have to make the final decision yourself, take the opportunity talk to mentors, colleagues and network contacts.

**Would you like to pursue a career within university or the academic system?  
Or do you choose one of the many career paths outside university?**

*If you are looking for an academic career, questions 1 to 3 apply to you.*

*If you have opted for a non-university career, continue with question 4.*

### Academic career

Detailed information on the (German) university system, on support programmes for junior research groups and on the prerequisites for a faculty appointment can be found on the JUNO website.

[www.juno.hhu.de/en/career/academic-career](http://www.juno.hhu.de/en/career/academic-career)

1. What competencies do I already have to pursue an academic career?
2. Which competencies need to be further developed?



Competence analysis  
with ResearchComp  
see page 5

Competencies

2. What strategic steps are available for career development through research funding?

Strategies

3. What other form of support can I ask my mentor for if necessary (e.g. reference letter, contact mediation, conference visits, further education trainings)?

Support

### Non-university career

A variety of other career options are open to you in addition to an academic career. JUNO offers workshops and consulting formats that can help you. Find out more on the JUNO website.

[www.juno.hhu.de/en/career/non-university-career](http://www.juno.hhu.de/en/career/non-university-career)

4. When is a good time to move from university to the general labour market?

Timing

5. What special skills, abilities and strengths do I have? How can I further develop them for the non-academic labour market?



Competence analysis  
with ResearchComp  
see page 5

Competencies

6. Are there network contacts/cooperations from the current position that I can use?

Network

7. What other form of support can I ask my supervisor and/or mentor for if necessary (e.g. reference letter, contact mediation, attendance of career fairs, further training opportunities)?

Support