

Research Funding Opportunities for Young Researchers in the Social Sciences: Germany

Funding programmes for early-career researchers

Max Weber Programme –
Academic Careers Observatory Conference
San Domenico di Fiesole
28 January 2020

Dr. Holger Finken, DAAD

Funding for Young Researchers (Postdocs) in Germany



Alexander von Humboldt
Stiftung/Foundation

Research Fellowships
Feodor Lynen Programme

DAAD

PRIME

DFG

***Positions in DFG-sponsored
Research Projects***
Walter Benjamin Programme

DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

PRIME – Postdoctoral Researchers International Mobility Experience, *since 2014*



This project received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 605728

- **Programme initiated in 2014**
(with FP7/Marie Curie/COFUND)
- **Funding of postdoctoral outgoing mobility based on employment/position instead of stipend**
- **Combination of outgoing and incoming phase: 12+6**

18-months work contract at German university

Research stay abroad (12 months)

Return phase (6 months)

■ Funding conditions:

- All nationalities (independent of country of residence)
- All subject areas
- No age restrictions
- All destinations (compliance with “mobility rule”)*

*restrictions for applicants from non-EU and non-associated countries apply

■ Funding administered by employing German university

- Salary (with social security benefits)
- Expatriate allowance (depends on destination and salary)
- Direct DAAD component: Travel allowance

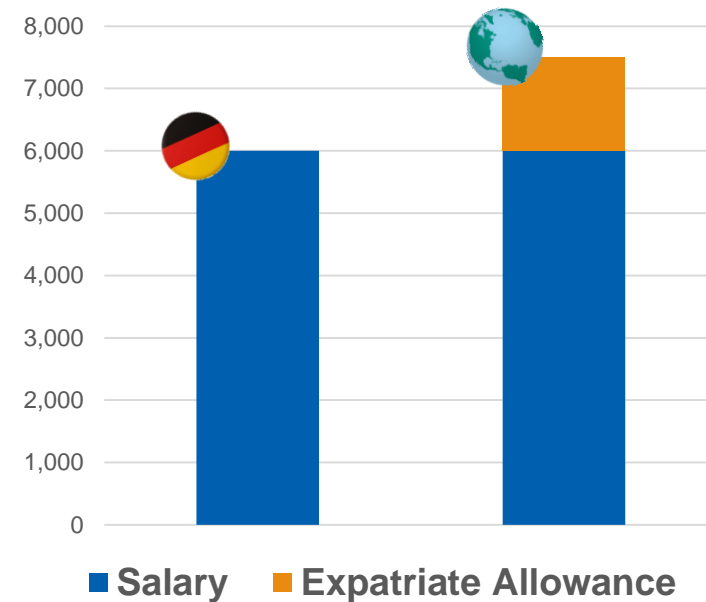
PRIME – Funding data per fellow

■ Average employer costs:

- per fellowship (18 months): € 125k – 130k
- per fellowship-month in Germany: € 6k
- per fellowship-month abroad: € 7.5k

■ Average fellow's monthly net income:

- while in Germany (net salary only): € 2.3k
- while abroad (net salary + tax-free expatriate allowance):
€ 4k [€ 3.7k - € 4.2k]



■ **Employment/Social security:**

- Employment in Germany; also during mobility phase abroad („Entsendung“)
- Social-security coverage throughout entire fellowship duration
- Pension scheme entitlements
- Possibility of parental leave, part-time work
- As employed researchers: Fellows on equal footing with other scientists at German host institute

■ **Re-integration**

- re-integration phase as mandatory part of the programme

“Offering a proper work contract and social insurance really sets the PRIME programme apart. It is a constant frustration in postdoctoral life to be denied work contracts and social insurance, and one that creates considerable resentment towards the funding system and the university in general, as ultimately it abusively takes advantage of people's enthusiasm for their work. The system of scholarships should be replaced by one based on proper work contracts with social insurance as much as at all possible. The DAAD's initiative really has to be most highly recommended.”

Comment from PRIME fellow, Feedback Survey, 2018

PRIME – Selection Criteria

- **Academic qualification** (grades, study duration, letters of recommendation etc.)
- **Publications** (number, quality/impact, first authorships)
- **Project** (scientific quality, realistic planning, feasibility)
- **Suitability of host institutions**
- **Other achievements:**
 - extra-curricular activities, social commitment;
 - international mobility; interdisciplinary or intersectoral experience
 - personal circumstances: e.g. unavoidable delays in academic development due to child care

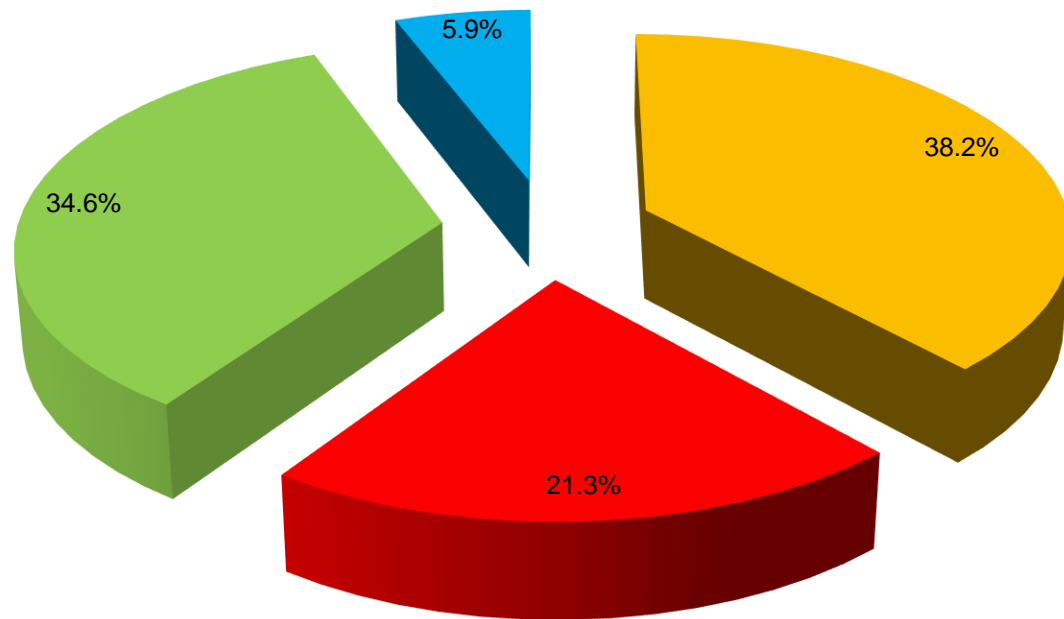
PRIME – Selection process

- **Reviews by external experts** usually 2 or more
 - 2017: 294 applications, success rate ~ 9 %
 - 2018/19: 246 applications, success rate ~ 11 %
 - 2019/20: 225 applications, success rate ~ 12 - 14 %

- **Selection Committee Meeting**
 - ~30 professors (national/international)

- **Communication of results**
 - approval or rejection letters
 - anonymized reviewers' comments provided

PRIME – Fellows by subject area 2014 – 2018/19

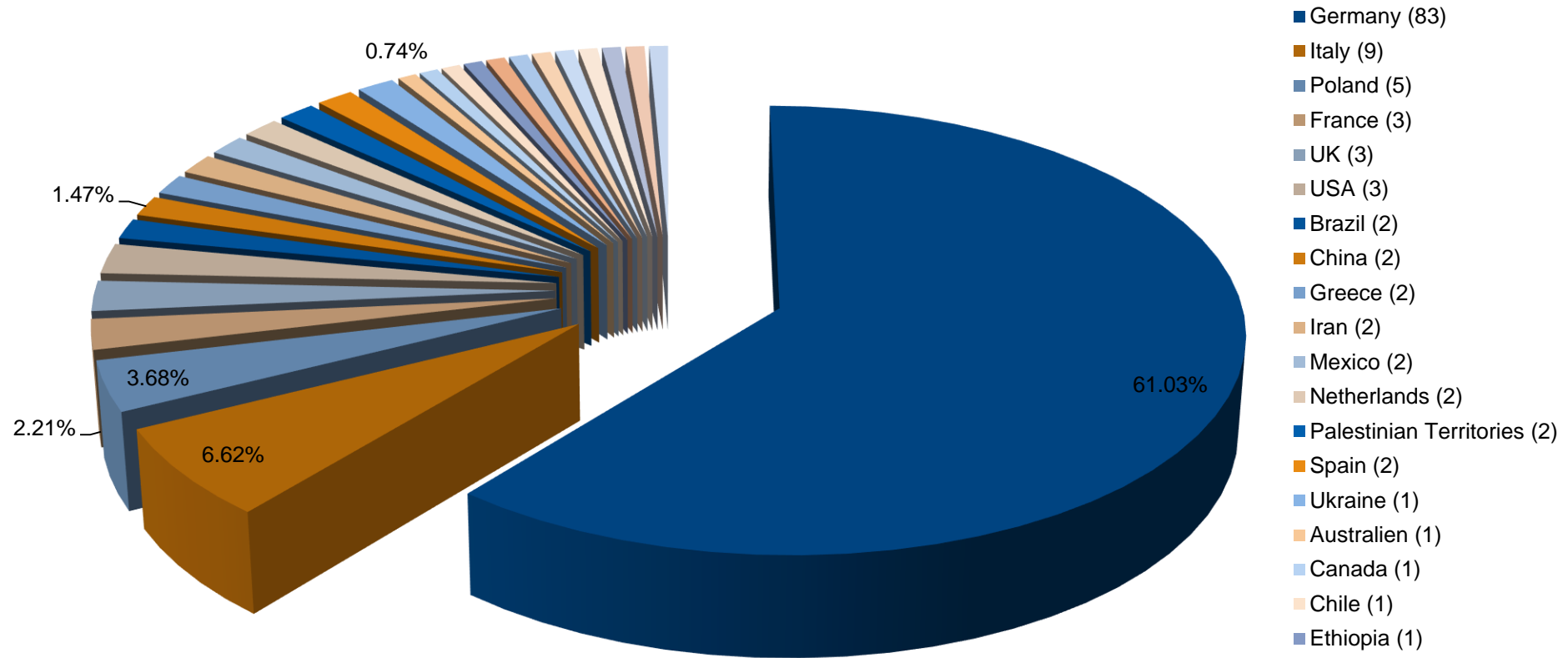


- Humanities / Social Sciences (52)
- Life Sciences (29)
- Natural Sciences (47)
- Engineering (8)

136 Fellows:
cohort 2014 = 30
cohort 2015 = 25
cohort 2016 = 30
cohort 2017 = 24
cohort 2018/19 = 27

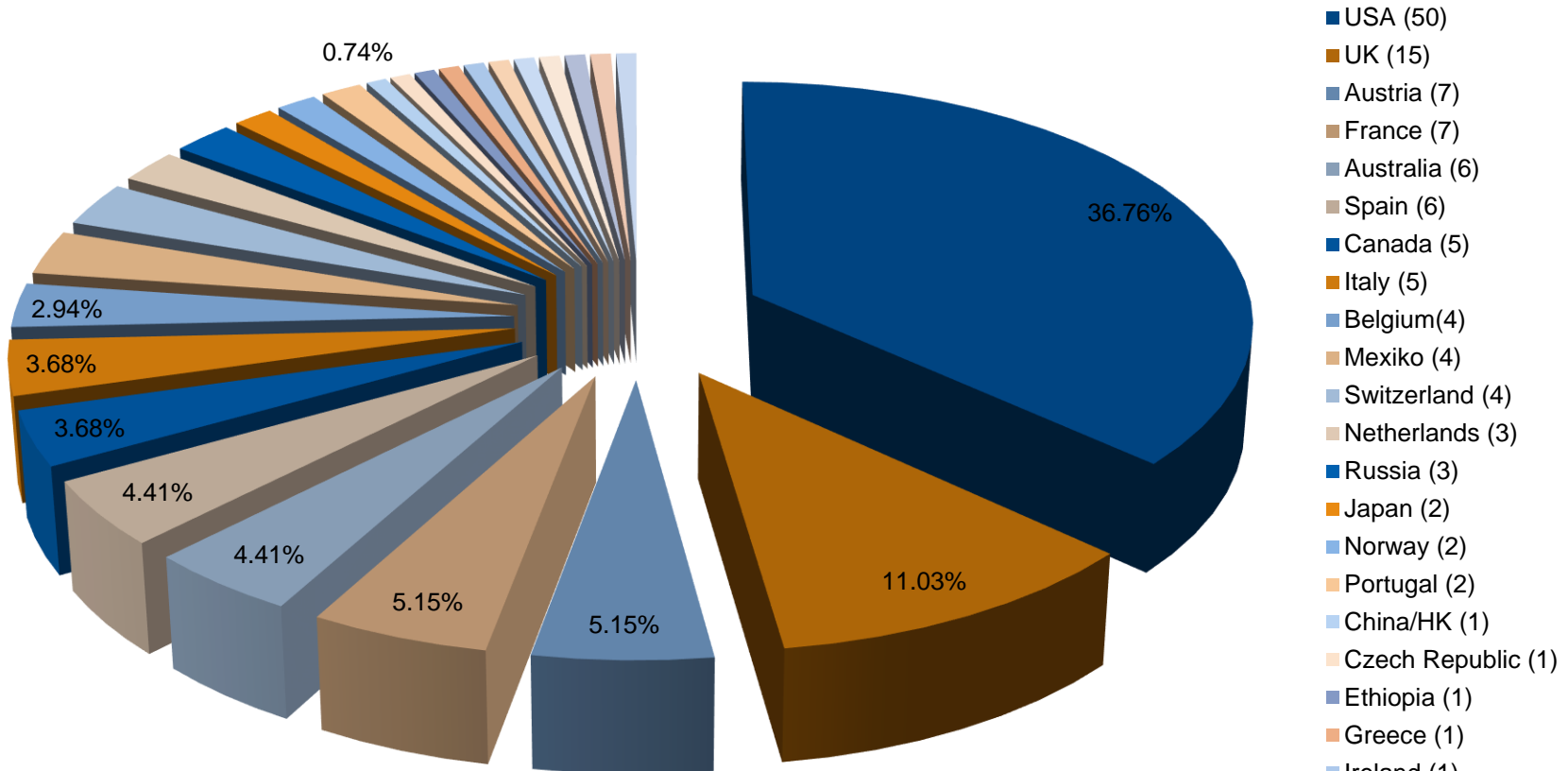
PRIME – Fellows by nationality

2014 – 2018/19



136 Fellows: 27 different nationalities

PRIME – Fellows by country of destination 2014 – 2018/19



136 Fellows; 27 Destinations

■ 2020/21 application/selection cycle

- Call for applications: 1 May 2020
- Application deadline: 28 August 2020
- Formal eligibility check: September 2020
- External Review Process: Oct-Dec 2020
- Selection committee meeting: February 2021
- Information Seminar for new fellows: March 2021
- Earliest fellowship starting date: 1 May 2021

Standard Incomer Programme: DAAD Research Grants

Objective:

Promote research projects within the context of doctoral programmes at home university .OR.

Support entire doctoral projects in Germany

■ Short-term grants (non-extendable)

➤ 1-6 months

■ One-year grants (non-extendable)

➤ usually 7-10 months

■ Long-term grants to obtain a PhD in Germany

➤ usually max. 3 years, up to 4 years in exceptional cases



Research Fellowships: Application Requirements and Benefits



Research fellowships for research stays in Germany

Humboldt Research Fellowships Postdoctoral Researchers

	Programme structure	Application requirements
Duration of sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 6 to 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● above average doctorate
Application period	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● applications at any time, doctorates completed less than 4 years ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● academic publications● agreement by academic host
Fellowship amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● €2,670 per month (plus additional benefits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● independent research proposal● knowledge of German and/or English



Look for a host in Germany

through the Humboldt Foundation's Network Online

- Network Online can be used to locate Humboldtians' host institutes
- searches can be filtered by subject area, location or keyword

www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/netzwerk-recherche.html

on the EURAXESS Germany website

www.euraxess.de/germany/information-assistance/finding-academic-host

with the help of information portal GERiT – German Research Institutions from DFG, DAAD and HRK

- contains more than 25,000 institutes at German universities and non-university research institutions
- allows searches based on geographical, field-related and structural criteria

www.gerit.org/en/

ask colleagues at your institute who have contacts in Germany (possibly Humboldtians)



Application procedure

- applications at any time to the Foundation directly
- assessment by independent peer reviewers
- decision by independent selection committees
- duration of procedure: approximately 4 to 7 months





Benefits provided

- fellowship
- travel lump sum
- language courses
- benefits for families
- allowance for research costs for the host institute
- intensive and individual mentoring in Germany and abroad by personal contacts at the Foundation
- study tour, network meeting, annual meeting
- return fellowships for specific regions
- alumni sponsorship

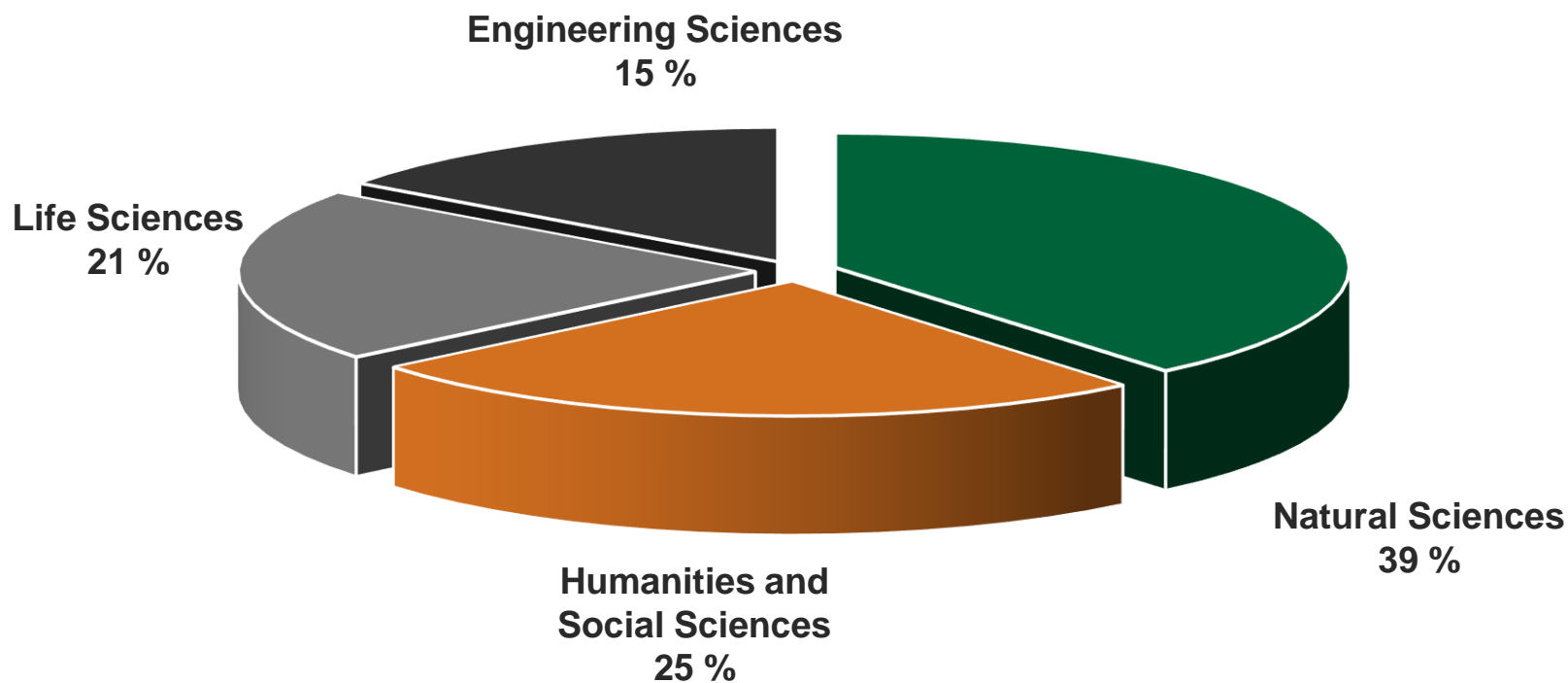




Disciplines of guest researchers

2014–2018:

3,059 research fellowships granted to academics from abroad

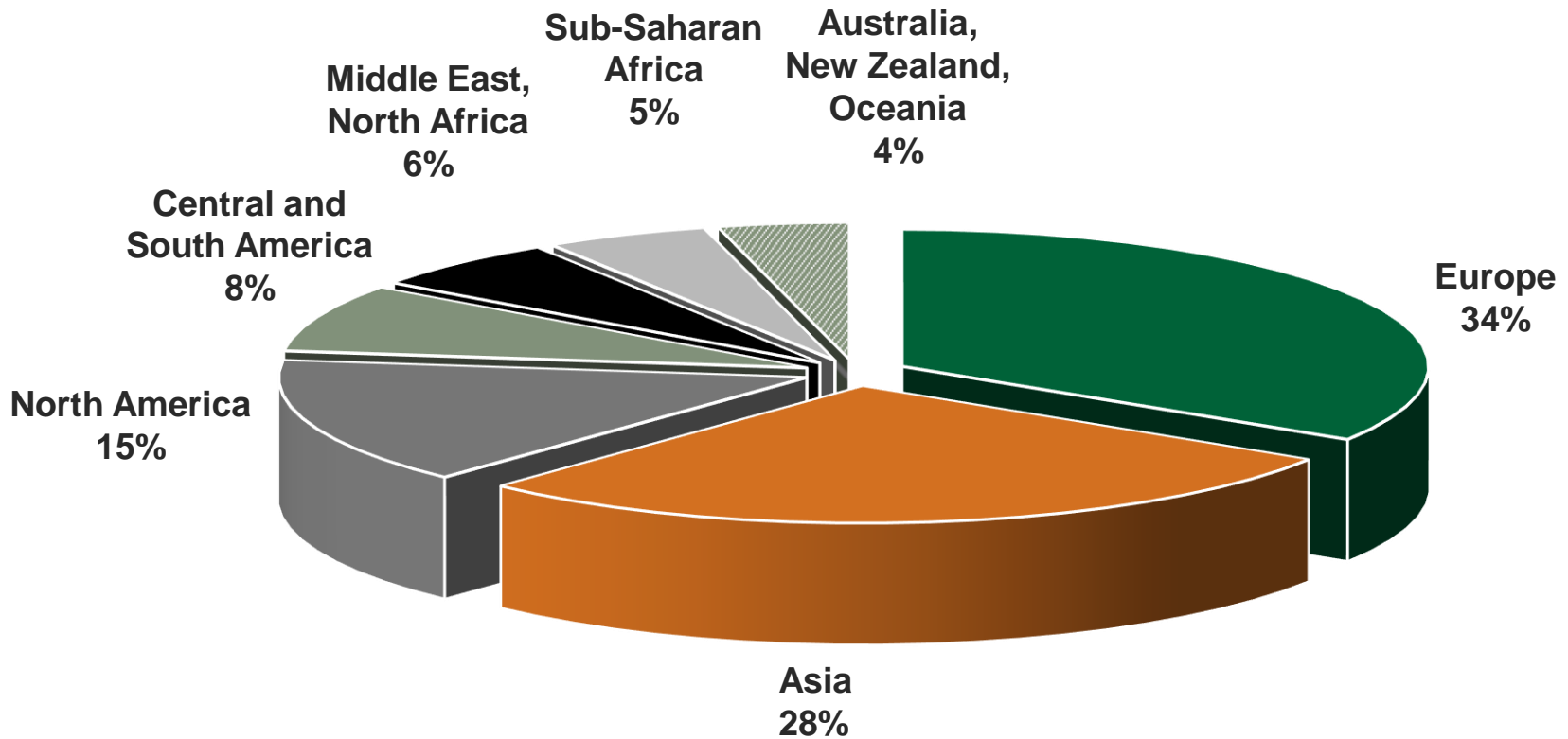




Origin of guest researchers

2014–2018:

3,059 research fellowships granted to academics from abroad



Thank you for your attention.

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