



Klaus Töpfer Sustainability Fellowship 2025 Call for Applications

The Research Institute for Sustainability – Helmholtz Centre Potsdam (RIFS) is an international, inter-, and transdisciplinary research institute in Potsdam, Germany. The main focus of the institute is to integrate different types of knowledge to support a transformation of society towards sustainability. Its research approach is transdisciplinary, transformative, and co-creative. The RIFS awards the **Klaus Töpfer Sustainability Fellowship** as part of its Fellow Programme. Prof. Dr Klaus Töpfer was the Founding Director of the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) – now RIFS – in Potsdam, Germany. With the Klaus Töpfer Sustainability Fellowship, RIFS wants to support individuals who, like Klaus Töpfer, are committed to sustainable development and build bridges between science, politics, and society.

RIFS is looking for applications from highly talented mid-career professionals, from Germany or abroad, who have worked for at least ten years on issues related to sustainable development and have the potential to serve as change agents. Applicants should bring innovative ideas from their respective fields in science, the arts, civil society, business, politics, or other areas of society and have gained professional experience in different countries and cultures.

The Klaus Töpfer Sustainability Fellowship is awarded for one year and will commence in the first quarter of 2025. The fellowship can be flexibly adapted to the candidate's life situation, for example divided into intervals. The chosen candidate is expected to pursue their project on site in Potsdam during the entire term and to contribute to the work of the institute. Please visit our website for more information about the [Klaus Töpfer Sustainability Fellowship](#) and a list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The Klaus Töpfer Sustainability Fellowship is supported by a discretionary budget of up to 50,000 €, which can be applied to cover travel expenses, publication fees, support for organizing workshops, or production costs for artistic work, for example. The fellowship's benefits include a monthly stipend and financial compensation to cover additional living costs during the stay in Germany.

Have we piqued your interest? If so, we look forward to receiving your application in English.

Applications must be received by April 14th, 2024, 23:59 CEST. To apply, please submit your application in English, collated in a single PDF file no larger than 10 MB, to christina.camier@rifs-potsdam.de. The full application requires:

- A **letter of motivation** (6,500 characters max.), outlining your prior experience at the interface of science and another sector of society, explaining how you intend to build a bridge between different sectors and how you became aware of the call.
- A **project proposal** (15,000 characters max., plus references), outlining the activities you wish to pursue during your tenure as a Klaus Töpfer Sustainability Fellow. The proposal should specify the project title, activities, research fields, expected outputs/aims, work plan, financial and/or physical resources and timeline, and highlight the intended long term impacts.
- A **current CV** (10,000 characters max., plus key publications), outlining your career path and five most important achievements.
- **Two letters of recommendation** (these must include the names and contact details of referees).



The fellowship will be awarded in late 2024. The selection process will involve a committee including external advisors who will receive the applications. Your personal data will be processed for the purpose of conducting the selection procedure on the basis of Art. 6 para. 1 b, Art. 88 GDPR in conjunction with Art. 26 of the Data Protection Act for the State of Brandenburg. After completion of the procedure, application documents will be deleted in compliance with data protection regulations. Please see our [GDPR Statement](#) for further information. In case of any further queries, please contact Christina Camier, either via email at christina.camier@rifs-potsdam.de or phone +49 331-62 64-277 33.

Diversity and equal opportunities are integral components of our human resources policy. We explicitly welcome applications from all qualified individuals, regardless of their ethnic or social origins, nationality, gender, sexual orientation and identity, religion/belief, age or physical characteristics. Persons with a registered severe disability status (whether in Germany or abroad) will be given preferential consideration in the event of equal suitability and qualification in accordance with the provisions of the German Social Code IX. If you have any questions, please contact our representative for the disabled at sbv@gfz-potsdam.de, who will be happy to assist you in the further application process. In case of further queries regarding gender equality, please do not hesitate to contact our Equal Opportunities Officer at gba@gfz-potsdam.de.