

heiTRACKS Mentoring Program for postdoctoral researchers: Dates 2025/2026

November 2025

| Date & Location | Content |
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| May, June, July | Applications possible until June 15, 2025 |
| Juni - Juli | Personal interviews with the program manager |
| July - September | Matching phase |
| September – October | Briefing for mentors online, ca. 30 minutes, different dates available Input: Dr. Max Vetter, <i>program manager heiTRACKS Mentoring</i> |
| 22.10.2025 17:00-19:30 Uhr Senatssaal & Bel Etage, Alte Universität | Opening ceremony and farewell with current and previous mentees and mentors Welcoming the new cohort and farewell to the finishing cohort, review on the previous mentoring year, outlook on the coming year, get together with reception in the university's <i>Bel Etage</i> <i>Participation for mentees is mandatory</i> |
| 24.10.2024 9:00-16:30 Uhr heiSKILLS Seminarzentrum, Bergheimer Str. 58A | Kickoff workshop for mentees Contents: Getting to know each other, role clarification, topics and goals for the mentoring, shaping the mentoring relationship, topics and collaboration in the program Moderated by: Dr. Max Vetter, <i>program manager heiTRACKS Mentoring</i> <i>Participation for mentees is mandatory</i> |
| 28.11.2025 13:00-14:30 Uhr, ZUV, Seminarstr. 2, room 235 12:00 Uhr lunch @ Triplex Mensa | Networking event #1: How do I get funded? Funding from EU, DFG, the German Federal Government and how the Heidelberg Research Service can support you At the first networking event, the Heidelberg Research Service will provide an overview of funding opportunities for research projects, various third-party funding bodies and programs as well as the services and advice available at Heidelberg University. |

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| (we meet in front of the mensa) | <p>Before, we will get together for an informal lunch exchange.</p> <p>Input: PD Dr. Yvonne Pachmayer, Heidelberg Research Service</p> |
| <p>10.12.2025</p> <p>16:30 Uhr</p> <p>Christmas Market @Kornmarkt</p> | <p>After-Work-Christmas Market</p> <p>heiTRACKS mentoring goes Christmas Market – past and present mentees are welcome to meet for a hot drink at Kornmarkt.</p> |
| <p>11.2.2026</p> <p>9:00-16:30 Uhr</p> <p>heiSKILLS Seminarzentrum, Bergheimer Str. 58A</p> | <p>Qualification workshop #1: Understanding Power and Micropolitics at Universities – Empowerment for Postdocs</p> <p>Power is not an abstract concept; it is relational, especially in universities. For postdocs, power is as well allocated (contracts, rights, roles), and enacted and negotiated daily: as micropolitics in labs, committees, supervisions, decisions, relationships. Working in presence allows us to do the thing this workshop is about: recognise power in real gestures, in language, in status games and practice responses. This is not a moral workshop about „good vs bad“. I plan it as an empowerment workshop: turning power awareness into a tool of professional (self-)leadership.</p> <p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the formal power architecture of universities (rules, hierarchies, committees, governance) • recognise informal power (network capital, reputational power, symbolic capital – who gets listened to, who gets ignored, who frames the problem) • expand their repertoire to use power as constructive agency (design power, not domination) • develop strategies to protect themselves and others against power abuse <p>Moderated by: PD Dr. Mareike Menne, <i>Busch & Dr. Menne Hochschulconsulting GbR</i></p> |
| April | Interim review workshop of the mentoring |
| <p>28.4.2026</p> <p>12:00-13:30</p> <p>Online, sign-up here</p> | <p>heiTRACKS CareerPlus #1: Negotiating Salaries inside and outside Academia</p> <p>Join this interactive online session to learn how to navigate salary negotiations when transitioning into roles in industry, the public sector, or academia. We will discuss how to assess your market value, define realistic salary expectations, and communicate your strengths effectively. We will also explore how collective agreements shape salary structures in Germany and highlight where postdocs still have room to negotiate within these frameworks.</p> |

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| | Input: Julia Barden |
| May | <p>Networking event #2: Appointment negotiations at Heidelberg University – insights, exchange and experiences</p> <p>This networking event will give you an insight into the discussions and negotiations as well as the dos and don'ts surrounding appointments from the perspective of Heidelberg University's Appointments Service (Human Resources Department). After an introduction, there will be time for your questions and to share your experiences.</p> <p>Input: Heike Dollmann, <i>Head of Berufungsservice at Heidelberg University</i></p> |
| June 4 hours online | <p>Qualification workshop #2: The Art of Small Talk and Networking: Building Meaningful Connections – In and Beyond Academia</p> <p>For many postdocs, small talk and networking can feel awkward, artificial – or simply beside the point. Yet the ability to start and sustain professional conversations is often just as crucial as research excellence. Whether you're at a conference, visiting a lab, or exploring your next career step, how you connect with others can open doors that your publication list alone cannot.</p> <p>This hands-on workshop offers a practical and strategic approach to small talk and networking – tailored specifically to postdoctoral researchers. It goes beyond academic settings, because meaningful conversations often begin in informal moments: over coffee, at receptions, or during a hallway chat. Through short, interactive exercises, personal feedback and peer exchange, you will learn how to feel more at ease in spontaneous conversations, ask better questions, and communicate your ideas and expertise naturally – without slipping into self-promotion.</p> <p>Input: Dr. Michael Gordan, <i>Berlin</i></p> |
| 23.9.2026 12:30-14:00 Online, sign-up here | <p>heiTRACKS CareerPlus #2: Understanding the German Academic System (for non-Germans and Germans)</p> <p>The German academic landscape can feel complex—especially for postdocs who are new to its structures, terminology, and regulations. This concise workshop offers an introduction to essential features of the German research system, including typical career pathways, the role of the Habilitation, common contract types, and the implications of the Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (WissZeitVG).</p> <p>Designed for international and German postdocs alike, the session provides input combined with interactive elements and time for questions. You will leave with a foundational understanding of how the German academic system works and what it means for your postdoctoral trajectory.</p> <p>Input: Dr. Wiebke Deimann, <i>Bonn</i></p> |

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| <p>October 2026</p> <p>ca. 2 hours</p> | <p>Concluding workshop</p> <p>Contents: Review, taking stock, strategies for a continuing mentoring relationship, outlook, evaluation</p> <p>Moderated by: Dr. Max Vetter, <i>program manager heiTRACKS Mentoring</i></p> <p><i>Participation for mentees is mandatory</i></p> |
| <p>October 2026</p> <p>17:00-19:30 Uhr</p> <p>Senatssaal & Bel Etage, Alte Universität</p> | <p>Farewell and opening ceremony with current and new mentees and mentors</p> <p><i>Participation for mentees is mandatory</i></p> |

We welcome all questions, ideas and suggestions under mentoring@uni-heidelberg.de.