FORCHEURS PRIZE 2027

Prize for Franco-German scientific cooperation in digital & health

1. Introduction to the Forcheurs Prize

The neologism *Forcheurs*, created by the Franco-German journalist Gérard Foussier, combines the German word *Forscher* (researcher) and the French word *chercheur* (researcher), and refers to researchers who work together on a daily basis on both sides of the Rhine. This symbolic name illustrates the goal of promoting closer cooperation between the German and French scientific communities. The Forcheurs Prize aims to recognize exceptional and promising Franco-German scientific collaborations, involving early-career researchers[1]. It has been awarded annually since 2017, under the patronage of Professor Jean-Marie Lehn, winner of the 1987 Nobel Prize in Chemistry. The celebration of the tenth edition in June 2026 marked the opening of a new chapter for the prize, leading to a new format and scope.

2. A new scope: digital & health

From the 2027 edition on, the French Embassy in Germany and the Franco-German University, in partnership with Sanofi-Aventis Deutschland GmbH and Siemens AG, intend to focus the Forcheurs Prize on a field that is becoming increasingly strategic for Europe's sovereignty, competitiveness, and resilience: the convergence between health sciences and digital technology. Digital technologies are profoundly transforming healthcare systems, and the concept of "digital health" reflects this evolution[2]. This dual revolution also raises fundamental questions regarding security, standardization, and ethics, particularly in the fields of neurosciences and digital technologies. Against that background, the new Forcheurs Prize aims to recognize promising Franco-German collaborations in the field of digital health, and more broadly, at the intersection of health and technology. The jury will pay particular attention to complementarity within the tandem and to the way in which both members mutually reinforce each other. Multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and even transdisciplinary projects are strongly encouraged. There are no specific expectations regarding the applied or fundamental nature of the cooperation involved.

[1] See the dedicated page about the award on the website Science Allemagne.

[2] The World Health Organization proposes a comprehensive definition of digital health on its website: *„Digital health is the field of knowledge and practice associated with the development and use of digital technologies to improve health. Digital health expands the concept of eHealth to include digital consumers, with a wider range of smart devices and connected equipment. The following areas are commonly understood as being part of, or related to, digital health: artificial intelligence, big data, blockchain, health data, health information systems, the infodemic, the Internet of Things, interoperability and telemedicine".*

3. Conditions of participation

Applicants for the Forcheurs Prize must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. One member of the team must be employed at a German-based institution and the other member at a French-based institution regardless of their citizenship;
2. Both members must work in a **research laboratory** affiliated with either:
    - a higher education institution
    - a research institution
    - a company
    - a funding structure (pôle de compétitivité, cluster, competence center);
3. The tandem is composed of two early-career researchers, with a maximum of 15 years of experience since completion of their PhD;
4. The tandem is **currently** collaborating on a joint research project at the time of the application submission;
5. There can be only 1 application submitted per individual and per collaborative project between two research laboratories.

The research project should focus on an issue at the interface between digital and health sciences and/or technologies, including the topic of digital health. Applications covering uniquely health or digital sciences will not be considered as eligible. The organizing committee does not wish to establish a restrictive list of eligible disciplines, topics, or areas of focus. **Fundamental as well as applied research are welcome. Interdisciplinary approaches are strongly encouraged, including those drawing on the humanities and social sciences.**

4. Evaluation criteria

The applications will be evaluated by an interdisciplinary jury composed by prominent scientists in their respective scientific fields. The jury will pay particular attention to the following evaluation criteria when selecting the winning tandem:

1. The scientific quality of the research project;
2. The complementarity between both members of the tandem;
3. The interdisciplinary approach to the topic;
4. The added value, innovation and/or originality of the research work and of the collaboration itself, as well as their interaction;
5. The promising perspectives for collaborative research and the cooperation's potential to create new opportunities, formats and/or programs for students and early-career researchers in a European and/or international context.

5. Submission of application

By February 17th 2027 (23.59 Paris time zone), applicants must:

1. complete the LYYTI online form;
2. upload on their LYYTI session in a single PDF format and in the following order:
   - **a presentation of the tandem and the current joint research project based on the following application form**;
   - a CV per applicant in pdf format and max. two A4 pages showing the excellence of his/her research work (conferences, publications, patents, awards, etc.);
   - a letter of support endorsing the tandem can optionally be attached (max. one A4 page).

6. Award ceremony

The prize is worth €20,000, which is €10,000 per recipient.

The Forcheurs Prize 2027 award ceremony will take place on 30 June 2027, starting at 4:45 p.m. on the Main Stage of bio:cap – the International Life Sciences & AI Investival at CityCube Berlin, in the presence of the French Ambassador to Germany, the presidency of the Franco-German University, representatives of Sanofi-Aventis Deutschland GmbH and Siemens AG as well as the selection jury.

The awardees are required to take part in the ceremony with a speech, a short interview on stage and the presentation of their common research work.

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