

# Call for Proposals

## Concepts for Junior Research Groups within UCC Hamburg Research Focus

### Areas

#### **Mildred Scheel Cancer Career Center (MSNZ Hamburg)**

The Mildred Scheel Cancer Career Center Hamburg (MSNZ Hamburg), funded by the German Cancer Aid and the Medical Faculty of the University of Hamburg, in close collaboration with the University Cancer Center Hamburg (UCC Hamburg), invites proposals for the establishment of a Junior Research Group embedded within the UCC Hamburg research environment, starting in Q1/2 2027.

This initiative aims to strengthen interdisciplinary cancer research, foster collaboration across research areas, and create sustainable and competitive career perspectives for outstanding early-career researchers (Clinician Scientists and Medical Scientists).

#### **Funding Framework and Duration**

Selected concepts will receive initial funding of up to €150,000 per year for a maximum of 3 years provided by MSNZ Hamburg.

To ensure a viable and competitive Junior Group Leader position, proposals must outline a **binding overall funding perspective of at least 5 years**. This includes:

- a clearly defined **institutional commitment to co-funding** (additional positions, consumables, etc.) **for the first three years** and continuation after the initial MSNZ funding phase,
- a robust financial concept (group leader position + X) covering the **full 5-year** period (over the course of the full period, matching of MSNZ funds is expected),
- and a transparent transition plan **beyond the MSNZ funding phase**.

Proposals that do not demonstrate a secured funding perspective of  $\geq 5$  years will not be considered competitive.

Collaborative proposals involving multiple UCC Hamburg research areas or partner institutions are strongly encouraged and may include co-funding contributions.

#### **Recruitment Process and Eligibility**

Following the selection of a successful concept, MSNZ Hamburg will **initiate an international recruitment process** for the Junior Group Leader **together with the hosting institution**.

The position is preferentially open to external candidates, however, internal applications will not formally be excluded in the recruitment process. A suitable candidate should ideally show high potential to contribute to cross-departmental overarching research topics (e.g. Cancer Neuroscience; Immune Oncology, Cellular Therapy...)

The successful candidate must fulfil typical requirements for independent Junior Group Leaders (e.g., strong publication record, demonstrated scientific independence, and potential to acquire third-party funding).

## UCC Hamburg Research Focus Areas

Proposals must connect to the overarching MSNZ research focus & major UCC Hamburg research focus „Dissemination & Metastasis“ and align with at least one more of the UCC Hamburg research focus areas:

### **Overarching MSNZ research focus: Dissemination & Metastasis, including Liquid Biopsies**

This field investigates the mechanisms underlying tumor cell dissemination and metastatic progression. A particular emphasis is placed on innovative approaches such as liquid biopsies to enable early detection, monitoring, and targeted intervention in metastatic disease.

Other UCC Hamburg research focus areas:

- **Prostate Cancer**  
This research area focuses on improving the understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of prostate cancer across all disease stages. It integrates molecular biology, imaging, and clinical research to develop personalized therapeutic strategies and optimize patient outcomes.
- **Hematological Malignancies and Cellular Therapies**  
Research in this area addresses malignant diseases of the blood and immune system, combining fundamental insights with cutting-edge therapeutic approaches. A strong focus lies on the development and clinical implementation of cellular therapies, including CAR-T cells and other immune-based strategies.
- **Neuro-Oncology**  
This area explores primary and secondary tumors of the central nervous system, integrating basic, translational, and clinical research. The goal is to advance understanding of tumor biology and improve diagnostics, treatment options, and patient care in these complex diseases.
- **Psycho-Oncology**  
Psycho-oncology focuses on the psychological, social, and behavioral dimensions of cancer. Research aims to improve mental health, quality of life, and supportive care for patients and their families throughout the cancer continuum.
- **Head and Neck Cancers**  
This field addresses malignancies of the head and neck region, combining translational and clinical research approaches. It aims to improve early detection, refine multimodal therapies, and enhance functional and oncological outcomes.
- **Gastrointestinal Cancers and Immuno-Oncology**  
Research in this area focuses on cancers of the gastrointestinal tract, integrating molecular insights with clinical innovation. A key emphasis is placed on immuno-oncology approaches to develop novel and more effective treatment strategies.
- **Cancer Epidemiology**  
This cross-cutting area investigates the distribution, causes, and outcomes of cancer in populations. It provides essential evidence for prevention strategies, early detection, and health care planning, linking population-based research with clinical and translational insights.

See also: [UKE - UCC Hamburg - Research Programs](#)

## Proposal Structure

(3-5 pages, Calibri 11, line spacing 1.15)

### Contact Information

- Applicant (name, email, phone)
- Primary host institution (including supporting Principal Investigator)
- Partner institutions (if applicable, including responsible Principal Investigators)

### 1. Field of Research

- key research questions and objectives (3–5 years),
- working plan outline,

### 2. Integration into the Department / Institute

Describe:

- integration into the scientific and/or clinical strategy of the hosting institution,
- planned collaborations within UCC Hamburg and partner institutions.

### 3. Integration into UCC Hamburg & MSNZ Hamburg Strategy

Explain how the proposed Junior Group:

- aligns with one or more UCCH research focus areas,
- strengthens interdisciplinary collaboration,
- contributes to the scientific goals of UCCH and MSNZ Hamburg ([UKE - UCC Hamburg - Research at UCC Hamburg](#)).
- potential to contribute to joint third-party funding initiatives (e.g., DFG FOR, KFO, EU grants).

### 4. Requested Positions and Funding Plan

Specify:

- requested position(s) (e.g., Junior Group Leader, staff),
- required consumables,
- **detailed co-funding contributions from host institutions,**
- **complete funding plan covering at least 5 years.**

Include a structured funding model, for example:

- MSNZ: up to €150,000/year (max. 3 years)
- Host institution(s): co-funding (personnel, consumables, infrastructure)
- Continuation phase (years 4–5): fully specified institutional and/or external funding

### 5. Long-Term Career Perspective

Clearly distinguish between:

- **Mid-term funding security (mandatory ≥5 years)**
- **Long-term career perspective (beyond initial funding phase)**

Describe:

- tenure-track or permanent position options,

- institutional commitment to career development,
- evaluation criteria and timeline.

**Proposals will be evaluated based on:**

- scientific excellence and innovation,
- interdisciplinarity and collaborative strength,
- strategic fit with & contribution to UCC Hamburg research areas,
- **quality and credibility of the  $\geq 5$ -year funding concept,**
- feasibility and sustainability,
- quality of long-term career perspective.

**Submission Details**

Deadline: July 13, 2026

Submission format: single PDF (max. 3 pages)

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