



**Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds**  
Stiftung für medizinische  
Grundlagenforschung

□ ■    LEARNING  
□ □    FROM  
□ □ □ ■    PARTNERS  
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## REPORT 2018

BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM FONDS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Forschungsstelle Centrum für Soziale Investitionen und Innovation am  
Max-Weber-Institut für Soziologie der Universität Heidelberg

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## LEARNING FROM PARTNERS III

Learning from Partners is a scientific research project that has been conducted for the third time in 2017/2018 at the Centre of Social Investment at Heidelberg University. The project pursues the systematic evaluation of the cooperation between foundations and their partners (applicants, grantees, cooperation partners). Within a standardized online survey the foundations' partners are invited to provide their feedback on the subjects of satisfaction, administration, capacity building and their general perception of the foundation. In the 2017/2018 survey the following foundations were evaluated: the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds, the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (German Federal Environmental Foundation), the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, the Klosterkammer Hannover, the Software AG – Stiftung, the Stiftung Mercator, the Volkswagen Foundation and the Wilhelm Sander-Stiftung.

### Satisfaction of the partners of the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds

The partners of the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds (BIF) are above average satisfied with the contact and the cooperation with the foundation. 86.1% rate the partnership very good, further 12.1% good. With regard to the very good ratings, the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds is ~20% above average of all foundations. The communication of the grantees with their contact is above average as well, 78.9% of the partners rate it very good, further 13.6% good. In the total sample of foundations, the ratings amount to 68.1% and 24.1%, respectively.

### Rating of administrative processes

The formal requirements on an application are marked as straightforward by the majority of the partners of the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds. With 95.3% of aggregated consent, the BIF is above average to the total sample. It also stands out from the comparative average with regard to its information policy and the transparency of the application processing. Cumulatively 79.2% stated that they were informed about the internal application processing, whereas this number amounts to 67.8% in the total sample. 31.3% of the partners rate their administrative effort very good, further 44.9% good.

### Contributions to capacity building

The Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds is characterized by purposeful and customized supportive programmes for its fellowship holders. These offers are positively accepted and rated. With 77.6% very good and 11.5% good ratings, the additional supportive programmes such as travel allowances and seminars for its fellowship holders are salient. 79.6% of all partners indicate that the cooperation with the BIF has furthered their personal development. With regard to new professional networks and the improvement of their career chances, results are evaluated as positive above average. The results indicate that by providing supportive programmes going beyond financial support, the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds plays a particular role in supporting its partners' academic careers.

### **The Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds in the perception of its partners**

The Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds is notably perceived as a demanding, renowned and reliable foundation. These features are confirmed by 80% to 90% of all respondents. Receiving a fellowship or grant by the BIF represents a special seal of quality for 75.5%. In comparison to the total sample, where the result is 65.2%, this is above average again. 95% of the fellowship holders confirm that the support offered by the BIF is personal and individual. Only with regard to the foundation as a source of social change, the perception is below-average with 39.4% of consent. In case of a foundation supporting basic research, this usually is a difficult claim.

### **On the transparency of the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds**

The transparency topic remains controversially discussed among foundations and was subject of questioning among the partners. 68.8% of all partners indicate that they have been informed about the evaluation process concerning their application. In the comparative average, the number amounts to 62%. The transparency of decision-making processes are rated 63.2% very good and good, in the total sample the number amounts to 59.2%. Compared to the other dimensions evaluated the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds differs slightly from the general ratings of all foundations' partners.

### **Feedback of declined applicants**

As expected, declined applicants are more critical than grantees. 28% of all declined applicants are very satisfied and 40.9% are rather satisfied with their contact to the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds during the application process. In the comparison sample, the numbers amount to 28.3% and 37.6% respectively. The BIF asserts itself in this dimension and manages to maintain the level of satisfaction via other ways than providing information about the reasons why the application has been turned down. Among all declined applicants 48.3% were informed about the reasons of rejection, whereas at the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds the number amounts to 17%.

In sum, the results of the Learning from Partners study can be interpreted as confirmation and appreciation of the work of the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds. They foster its position as funding agency for the exclusive and direct promotion of basic research in biomedicine for up- and-coming scientists. The BIF obtains high levels of satisfaction among its partners, its contributions to capacity building including customized supportive programmes highly contribute to supporting its partners' academic career. This can be shown by the results on the positive effects that are accompanied by being granted a fellowship from the BIF. Besides an increase of reputation and successful personal development, the Boehringer Ingelheim Fonds provides professional networks that are valuable for exchange and most beneficial for its partners.