Technology
Arts Sciences
TH Köln

Call for applications for student side of STEM Match

1. What is it about?

STEM Match – Shaping female futures in science is part of the Female Professors Program 2030, a joint initiative of the German federal and state governments at TH Köln. The resulting STEM Match funding brings together female Bachelor's students and professors in STEM subjects as tandems: the student gains early hands-on experience in academia as a student research assistant, while the professor provides personal, subject-specific mentorship. The goal is to increase the proportion of women and gender-diverse individuals (women*) at the qualification levels leading to a professorship, as women* remain significantly underrepresented in STEM fields.

2. What is my role in the tandem?

Together with a female professor of your choice, you form a STEM Match. You bring curiosity about academic life; your professor will support you both professionally and personally over ten months. No prior experience is required. This position, held alongside your studies, gives you the chance to get to know every day academic life, expand your own skills, and build a network within academia — a great opportunity to explore whether an academic career could be the right path for you.

3. Who can participate?

This funding is aimed at women*, as this group remains underrepresented in academic STEM careers due to gender-based attributions. At the time of application, you must be enrolled in at least your 4th semester of a STEM related Bachelor's program in Faculties 06 to 12 at TH Köln (or have successfully completed your 3rd semester). Additional diversity characteristics that may contribute to an intersectional compounding of structural disadvantage will be given positive consideration in the selection process.

4. What is being funded?

The funding runs for 10 months (April 2027 to February 2028). During this time, you will be employed as a student research assistant for 7 hours per week at a faculty or institute. An extension or postponement of the funding period is not possible.

5. Was is expected of me?

Together with your professor, you will take part in the kickoff event on April 23, 2027, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM, held on-site in Cologne at the start of the funding period, as well as in an online check-in after approximately five months. At the end of the funding period, you will write a personal experience report. You also agree to take part in anonymized surveys for the purpose of evaluating the project, including beyond the funding period.

6. How do I apply?

Applications are submitted jointly, together with your professor's documents, as a tandem no later than February 12, 2027. Please submit the following documents as a single combined PDF (without application photos) via email to marie.neher@th-koeln.de:

- Your motivation letter (max. 1 page), addressing the following:
    a) What do you hope to gain from participating in this funding program?
    b) In what ways do you see yourself as belonging to the group striving for greater diversity within academic staff?

c) What has your academic journey looked like so far, how long do you expect your studies to take, and (if applicable) do you already have a career goal in mind?,

- your tabular CV, incl. outline of previous appointments as a student research assistant
- your current transcript of records and
- an informal declaration of consent to participate in the anonymized surveys.

7. Selection and contact

As funding is limited, applications are selected on a criteria basis from the tandem applications received — including the coherence and depth of reflection in your motivation letter, the fit with the funding's objectives, and the plausibility of a good working relationship with your professor. There is no legal entitlement to funding; if unsuccessful, you are welcome to reapply in the next cycle. If you have any questions, please contact marie.neher@th-koeln.de.

Technology
Arts Sciences
TH Köln