



LUDWIG
BOLTZMANN
GESELLSCHAFT
Career Center

LExA

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE
AWARD IN RESEARCH

Leadership

**NOMINATE
EXCELLENT
LEADERS NOW!**

Nominations are open
until **May 22, 2026**

WHY AN AWARD?

LExA, initiated by the Career Center of the Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft, aims to emphasize the significance of leadership in academia. It seeks to recognize and promote leaders who successfully navigate the challenges of academia and serve as role models for young researchers. The focus is not solely on management skills but on leadership skills, emphasizing the ability to influence and motivate others, foster a positive attitude, and act as role models to bring sustainable change to the academic system.

The award aims to contribute to improving the visibility of leadership and developing necessary competencies, creating better conditions for researchers and fostering better research outcomes.

1 LACKING LEADERSHIP TRAINING/AWARENESS

The transition to leadership roles in scientific fields poses a unique challenge, as traditionally, success has been linked primarily to subject expertise rather than leadership skills. The competitive nature of the scientific environment often results in individuals attaining leadership positions without the necessary leadership training, a contrast to the strategic talent management prevalent in industries. In addition, academic careers do not rely on long-term employment.

»Leading in science often means supporting other highly committed experts on their journey. And this journey often has the goal of moving from the current organization to another one.«

DR. MARKUS EBNER - Founder of the Positive Leadership PERMA-Lead Model

2 SPECIFIC CHALLENGES IN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Leaders in research and development face distinct challenges, including high performance pressure, uncertain outputs, complex organizational structures, and hierarchies. The academic environment demands leaders to maintain high professional standards while navigating uncertainties intrinsic to research processes. Modern leaders are also tasked with mentoring young researchers, facilitating knowledge transfer, and supporting open innovation in science, responsibilities that are sometimes overlooked.

NOMINATE YOUR LEADERS NOW!

Get recognized for your work

Receiving the Leadership Excellence Award in Research shows that the researcher's efforts are valued and that they are making a significant contribution to their field.

Be a role model for leadership

Nominated leaders are role models for leadership for their own organization and can provide further impulses internally.

Promote equality & diversity

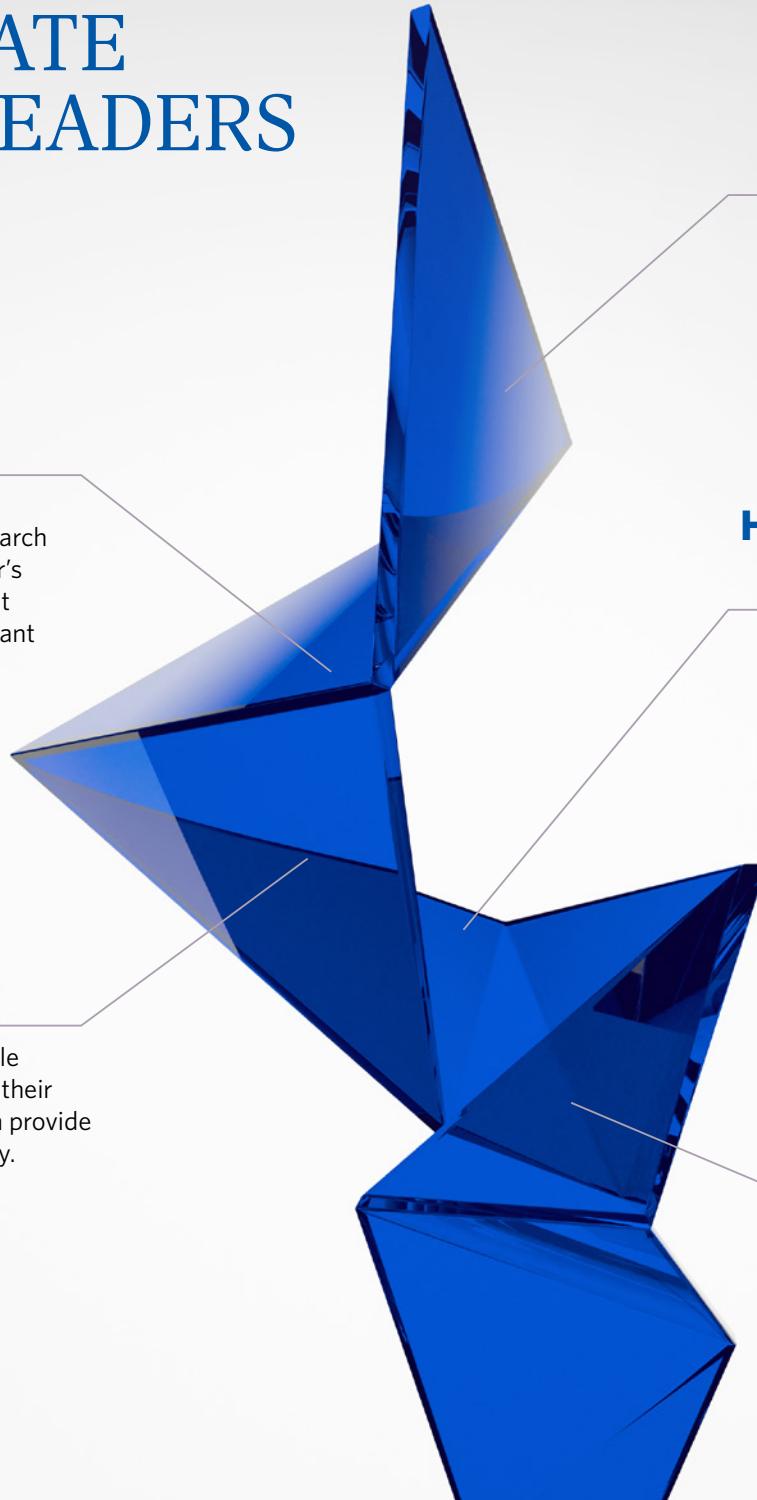
The award places the promotion of equality and diversity at the center of the evaluation.

Highlight qualitative leadership skills

The initiative underlines the efforts of "Reform on Research Assessment" (increased consideration of qualitative aspects such as teamwork, collaboration, leadership, training, mentoring).

Get funding for your team development

The award comes with a cash prize of €4.000 for team development activities.



NOMINATION PROCESS

In 2026, the jury comprises accomplished professionals in leadership and academia, including:



KERSTIN DÜBNER-GEE

Head of HR Development at Max Planck Society, co-editor & Guidance, Skills und Opportunities for Researchers board member.



DR. MARKUS EBNER

Founder of PERMA-Lead Model, keynote speaker, trainer, and university lecturer.



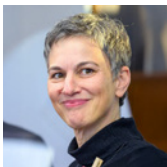
DR. MARKUS HAMMER

External Advisor and former Director of Learning at McKinsey & Company; Lecturer at TU Graz; certified coach focused on the human factor.



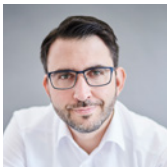
PROF. DR. ANNETTE MAYER

Economy professor with leadership roles incl. Vice-Rector at FOM Univ. & Rector at Open Business Univ.



CLAUDIA MÜLLER

Head of Leibniz Leadership Academy, ex-Chancellor of BTK Univ. of Art and Design.



PROF. DR. CARSTEN C. SCHERMULY (HABIL.)

Professor and Director at SRH's Institute for New Work & Coaching, specializing in future of work, leadership, and power dynamics; award-winning psychologist and HR thought leader.

Who can be nominated?

Researchers from the close research environment can be nominated who have at least 2 years of leadership responsibility. The award will feature 2 categories: **Emerging Leaders** and **Experienced Leaders**.

Selection criteria

The Nominee

- ▷ exemplifies **professionalism** and **integrity**, and thus serves as a role model
- ▷ clearly links individual work to institutional goals, providing a **clear vision**
- ▷ encourages **collaborative** and **creative efforts** in research
- ▷ champions **equality** and **diversity** in the workplace
- ▷ identifies and develops **strengths** in staff
- ▷ cultivates **positive relationships** for engagement and cooperation
- ▷ fosters **trust** and encourages ownership and initiative
- ▷ provides **coaching** and **mentoring** for career development.





LExA THROUGH THE YEARS: INSPIRING LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE

Great leadership drives scientific progress. Since its introduction in 2023, LExA has celebrated inspiring figures in science who foster collaboration, guide teams effectively, and initiate impactful projects. By doing so, the award has significantly raised awareness of the importance of leadership in the research community.

Since its introduction, LExA has received nominations from over 50 different Austrian research organizations, universities and spin-offs across Austria, with gender parity among nominees. Building on recent interest in how leadership functions in scientific settings, nomination data will contribute to a study aimed at improving understanding of effective science leadership.



»Our goal is to make excellent leadership in academia visible. The Leadership Excellence Award is more than an accolade; it is pioneering work, a one-of-a-kind Austrian initiative that has evolved into an internationally recognized flagship project driving lasting change.«

SUSANNE LEEB - LBG Career Center Director

HOW TO NOMINATE?

- ▶ Nomination is open to individuals capable of providing a well-founded assessment of the nominee's leadership work and its impact. This includes colleagues, team members, and superiors. At least 2-3 team members, colleagues etc. should be part of the nomination.
- ▶ The award decision is discretionary and valid without appeal.
- ▶ The submission must showcase the nominee's exemplary leadership through specific examples and their tangible effects. All application materials provided in **English** for the international peer review process.
- ▶ **For detailed application instructions and a comprehensive document list, please refer to the nomination guidelines on our website: cc.lbg.ac.at/lexa**

Submit your nomination via
our **LBG eSubmission Portal**
at esubmission.lbg.ac.at



LExA TIMELINE

FEBRUARY, 2026

**Publication of the call
and submissions possible**
via our **LBG eSubmission Portal**

MAY 22, 2026

**End of the
submission period**

JULY

**Selection process
by a jury of experts**

SEPTEMBER 24, 2026

LBG XChange

Presentation of the award's winner
by Federal Minister Eva Holzleitner
at Vienna's Leopold Museum

IMPRESSUM

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