



ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE
FÉDÉRALE DE LAUSANNE

EPFL Fellows

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EPFL Fellows co-funded by Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships at the EPFL **Rules and Regulations**

The Research Commission of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, hereby adopts the following:

Section 1 General provisions

Art. 1 Sphere of application

1. The Research Commission (herein after “CR”) of the *École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne* (herein after “EPFL”) grants to researcher’s fellowships intended to improve their scientific training and to assist them in establishing a research base at an important time point in their scientific careers (herein after “fellowship”).
2. The fellowships are Postdoctoral.
3. The fellowships may be requested in any scientific discipline within the EPFL.

Art. 2 Start and duration of the fellowship

4. The fellowship is granted for a period of twelve (12) or twenty four (24) months maximum.
5. Prolongation is not possible.
6. Fellowships cannot be granted retroactively.
7. Fellowships should start at the latest six (6) months after the decision date.

Art. 3 Research place

8. The fellowship funds residence of researchers in a laboratory at EPFL. The researchers must conduct the proposed research under the supervision of a Professor or a Senior Scientist (“*Maître d’enseignement et de recherche*”) at the EPFL (herein after “Principle Investigator” – PI).
9. Applicants having a PhD degree from EPFL are not allowed to perform a Postdoctoral stay at the laboratory/institution which awarded the PhD degree.

Art. 4 Selection Committees

10. The CR of the EPFL is responsible for the scientific evaluation and final ranking of the fellowships according to these regulations.
11. Fellowships are awarded through an independent, international, peer-review process designed

12. to ensure excellence. An international **Evaluation Committee** made up of multidisciplinary, international experts from the EU and associated countries assesses the applications, based on academic excellence and other key criteria. The Committee provides written assessments of the applications and makes recommendations about which applications to fund (scoring). As such, the international Evaluation Committee helps the **Research Commission** of the EPFL (CR-EPFL), chaired by the Dean of Research (DR) in his decision-making.
13. The Evaluation Committee is composed of 3 – 5 members in the field of basic sciences (chemistry, mathematics, physics), life sciences, engineering sciences (electrical & electronics eng., mechanical eng., micro-engineering, materials science), architecture, civil and environmental engineering, computer science, management of technology and financial engineering, and humanities and social sciences. The selection/nomination of the members of the Evaluation Committee is performed by the DR on the basis of criteria such as track record in the field, peer-reviewed publications and research funding awards in areas of research, and taking into account the "Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers" described in the European Charter for Researchers, which has been signed by the EPFL on September 16th, 2005.
14. Evaluation Committee members are responsible for evaluating the relative merits of each application submitted to them for review—except for ones which pose a conflict of interest—on the basis of the adjudication criteria to the programme and the letters of appraisal submitted as part of the fellowship application.
15. The DR allocates proposals to individual reviewers (members of the Evaluation Committee, three (3) for each application) taking into consideration the field of expertise of the reviewer, and avoiding conflicts of interest. Reviewers will be asked to confirm that they have no conflict of interest – according to the directives at EPFL – for each application that they are asked to evaluate.
16. All peer-reviewed applications are made available to the CR. During a first meeting, the assessments of the Evaluation Committee members are discussed for each individual application and based on a homogeneous reviewer's grading a short list of the most meritorious applications is established. Candidates, whose applications are highly ranked, are invited for an interview with the CR members. Simultaneously, the short listed applications are checked by the Research Integrity Officer at EPFL for all ethical issues e.g. are the necessary authorisations / notifications joined to the application.
17. The **interview** of the short listed candidates is scheduled approximately 3 months after the submission deadline. During the interview the following elements are addressed: their academic preparation, research experience and achievement, overall potential to carry out the project successfully, choice of the host laboratory, motivation and drive and their future career prospects. The CR panel discusses all applications and a final ranking is established. The final ranking is made by the plenum of the CR-EPFL. A decision is only valid with a 2/3 majority of the votes of the physically present CR-members when at least 2/3 of the CR-members are present. Members of the CR will not be allowed to take part in the decision-making for applications from candidates applying for a fellowship which will be hosted in their own lab or institute (conflict of interest)¹.
18. The **Steering Committee** (which contains members of the *Financial Services* and *Human Resources*) gives approval and makes decisions according to the available budget. The candidates are informed by the decision 4 months after the submission date.

¹ EPFL Directives concerning the management of conflicts of interest within the context of activities or public duties engaged in outside the working sphere (<http://polylex.epfl.ch/page58497.html>)

Section 2 Formal Requirements

Art. 5 Eligibility

In agreement with the 2011 People Work Programme, applicants to EPFL Fellows must be **Experienced Researchers (ER)**: “ER must, at the time of the recruitment by the EPFL, be in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience” (ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/wp/people/m-wp-201101_en.pdf).

The following eligibility criteria must be fulfilled:

19. Citizens of any nationality may apply, this includes EU member States, Associated Countries or Other Third Countries.
20. Applicants must have a PhD degree from a recognized university in the field in which they wish to continue their training or have at least four (4) years of full-time equivalent research experience.
21. Applicants must fulfil the incoming or re-integration criteria²:
 - a. (incoming) Applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Switzerland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior their application.
 - b. (re-integration) Applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Switzerland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior their application, and show at least three (3) years’ experience in research at the postdoctoral level in Other Third Countries, by the time they submit the application.
22. At the time of submission, applicants should not held their PhD degree for more than five (5) years. Exceptions may be granted if the researcher’s career has suffered inevitable delays due to care commitments towards family members and relatives or for gender-specific reasons, particularly in the case of women.
23. Have arranged in advance a research plan with a host laboratory at the EPFL.

There are no restrictions concerning the age, gender or nationality of the candidates. Candidates with career breaks or variations in the chronological sequence of their career steps are welcome. These candidates are encouraged to submit evidence-based CVs, reflecting a representative array of achievements and qualifications appropriate to the EPFL Fellows programme. Exceptions to the above rules are possible for women in particular in case of maternity leave, as EPFL has adopted a clear policy of equal opportunities for men and women (e.g. by including the legal provisions related to maternity leave, etc. in the employment conditions).

² **Mobility:** at the time of the relevant deadline for submission of proposals, researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of their host organization for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the reference date. Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.

Art. 6 Application Process

24. All application documents should be submitted electronically via the web platform “EPFL Fellows”.
25. All queries should be formulated in English.
26. Applicants should contact the following individuals who must create a temporary account in order to submit supporting letters for their application.
 - a. Two research referees
 - b. The PI at EPFL

Call for applications: three months before submission deadline

Submission deadline: October 1st (start fellowship earliest April 1st)

Section 3 Evaluation and Attribution

Art. 7 Evaluation Criteria

27. **Peer-review** - The individual reviewers, members of the international Evaluation Committee are asked to peer review the applications - within the guidelines of integrity of peer review, described in “[Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at the EPFL](#)” and to score the candidates measured by the following **selection criteria**:

Criterion 1. <i>Applicant Qualifications</i>	Threshold	3.50/5.00
	Weight	0.25
Issues to be addressed: academic preparation, demonstrated capacity for research excellence based on track-record, and overall potential to carry out the project successfully.		
Criterion 2. <i>Research Project</i>	Threshold	3.00/5.00
	Weight	0.25
Issues to be addressed: importance and originality of the research in a given field – the quality and novelty of the research proposed and its contribution to addressing an important gap of knowledge; the adequacy of the chosen approach, methodology and work plan for achieving the scientific and technological objectives, feasibility and quality of the design/methodology, and how well the proposal is written.		
Criterion 3. <i>Research Environment</i>	Threshold	3.00/5.00
	Weight	0.25
Issues to be addressed: suitability of facilities of the host lab, adequacy of the supervisor’s operating funds and other supports to carry out the project, and opportunities for collegial interaction, quality of the partnership; in particular, the scientific/technical competence and expertise of the host lab at EPFL as well as the complementarities of the host and candidate.		
Criterion 4. <i>Career Development</i>	Threshold	3.00/5.00
	Weight	0.25
Issues to be addressed: potential to enhance and advance the applicant’s research training and impact		

on the development of the researcher's career. Special attention will be paid to make reintegration of scientists possible after a career break. Indeed, EPFL has adopted a clear policy for equal opportunities for men and women. Therefore, in order to increase the number of women in research, the School supports the integration in the EPFL of women researcher whose scientific careers have been delayed or interrupted due to family obligations (children) or a change of residences due to their partner's career development.

Total	Threshold	3.50/5.00
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28. **Interview** - Short listed candidates are invited for an interview with the members of the Research Commission of EPFL. The interview is scheduled approximately 3 months after the submission deadline (for a given submission deadline, dates are announced on the EPFL Fellows web-page and candidates are asked to be available on all of the dates proposed until they have been assigned an interview date). The interview will take about 20 min; candidates will not be asked to give a presentation. During the interview the following elements are addressed: their academic preparation, research experience and achievement, overall potential to carry out the project successfully, choice of the host laboratory, motivation and drive and their future career prospects. The thresholds and weightings for the different criteria are summarized in the table below:

Criterion 1. <i>Applicant Qualifications</i>	Threshold 3.50/5.00 ; Weight 0.50
Issues to be addressed: academic preparation, research experience and achievement, and overall potential to carry out the project successfully.	
Criterion 3. <i>Research Environment</i>	Threshold 0.00/5.00 ; Weight 0.25
Issues to be addressed: choice of the host laboratory.	
Criterion 4. <i>Career Development</i>	Threshold 0.00/5.00 ; Weight 0.25
Issues to be addressed: motivation and drive and their future career prospects.	

To ensure fair treatment of the applications, it is crucial that the various experts interpret the scale of marks in as similar a fashion as possible. Rating Scale: 0.00 – 5.00.

5.0 – **outstanding**: All relevant aspects of the criteria under evaluation are successfully addressed.

4.0 – **excellent**: All relevant aspects of the criteria under evaluation are successfully addressed, shortcomings are minor.

3.0 – **very good**: The criteria under evaluation are very well addressed, although some improvements are possible.

2.0 – **good**: The criteria under evaluation are well addressed, although some improvements are necessary.

1.0 – **fair**: The criteria under evaluation are broadly addressed, significant weaknesses are detected.

0.0 – **poor**: The criteria under evaluation are not addressed, or part of the application are so poorly described that it is impossible to evaluate, or the proposal is incomplete.

Art. 8 Selection Process

29. *Step 1* – on or before the deadline, applicants submit their proposal to the EPFL Fellows web platform.
30. *Step 2* – the Fellowships Office of the EPFL Fellows programme forwards all eligible applications to the international Evaluation Committee.
31. *Step 3* – in January (call October 1st) of each year, the CR members interview short listed candidates and present the final ranking to the Steering Committee.
32. *Step 4* – the Fellowships Office of the EPFL Fellows programme informs the applicants of the outcome of their application. The results are announced in January of each year.

Section 4 Administrative Regulations

Art. 9 Terms of the fellowship

33. Successful applicants will be granted a **fixed term employment contract** at the EPFL, annually renewable, for a maximum 4 years post doc (of which maximum 2 funded through COFUND).

All granted people must:

- Follow the regulations governing research scientists at EPFL, described in “[Directive sur les rapports de travail des collaborateurs scientifiques de l’EPFL du 1er octobre 2005](#)” and in the programme description,
- Comply with the policies outlined in “[Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at the EPFL](#)”,
- Follow the regulations regarding ethical issues in research as outlined in the “[Charte éthique de l’EPFL](#)” and “[Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practice at the EPFL](#)”.

Section 5 Rights and Duties of the Fellowship Holder and the Host Researcher

Art. 10 Insurance

34. EPFL concludes an accident insurance in favor of the fellow for the duration of the fellowship.

Art. 11 Maternity, Sickness, Accident and Military Service

35. Approval must be obtained from the CR for any interruption of the fellowship.
36. Women are entitled to a payment of four (4) months during maternity leave.

37. In case of illness or accident, the CR will adjust the duration of the fellowship.
38. In case of military service, the duration of the fellowship may be extended on request.

Art. 12 Reporting and Acknowledgment

39. Fellowship holders should submit annual scientific reports to the CR, according to the guidelines established for this purpose.
40. The annual report should arrive at the Fellowships Office not later than 8 weeks after the end of the fellowship.

Art. 13 Research Integrity and Good Laboratory Practice

41. The postdoctoral fellow will function as a junior investigator, participating in research and related school activities and will follow the "[Directive sur les rapports de travail des collaborateurs scientifiques de l'EPFL](#)".
42. The Principal Investigator of the host laboratory shall fully inform the candidate of the "[Guidelines for Research Integrity and Good Laboratory Practice at the EPFL](#)" and will ascertain the fellow's acknowledgement to accept those guidelines.

Friday, 09 November 2012