



HUMAN FRONTIER SCIENCE PROGRAM

Application guidelines for Long-Term and Cross-Disciplinary Fellowships Award Year 2010

Registration deadline: **27 August 2009**

Submission deadline: **10 September 2009**

Contact details

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Registration and submission via
<http://extranet.hfsp.org> possible as of June/July 2009

I. OVERVIEW

The Human Frontier Science Program (HFSP) offers fellowships for basic research training in the life sciences across national and scientific boundaries. We invite applications for two international programs that support postdoctoral investigators who explore new research areas. The participation of scientists from outside the life sciences is particularly encouraged because the frontiers of science are often found at the interface of biological and physical sciences.

- **Long-Term Fellowships (LTF)** are reserved for applicants with a Ph.D. in a biological discipline to embark on a new project in a different field of the life sciences. Preference is given to applicants who propose an original study in biology that marks a departure from their previous Ph.D. or postdoctoral work so as to learn new methods or change study system.
- **Cross-Disciplinary Fellowships (CDF)** are open to applicants with a Ph.D. from outside the life sciences e.g. in physics, chemistry, mathematics, engineering or computer sciences who have had limited exposure to biology during their previous training. Applicants for the CDF should propose a significant departure from their past research by changing e.g. from material science or physics science to cell biology, from chemistry to molecular biology, or from computer science to neuroscience.

Applicants to both programs are expected to be exposed to new theory and methods during the tenure of the award while their previous expertise can be reflected in the proposed research project. It is expected that applicants clearly state the innovative aspects of the proposed project in terms of original research questions and techniques to be learned. In particular, applicants for a CDF should describe the biological techniques they will be exposed to and how their specific skills from their previous training will bear on the biological project they propose.

Fellowship projects can range from biological functions at the molecular and cellular level up to biological systems including cognitive functions. Within this broad area, all levels of analysis are supported: from studies on genes and individual molecules, intracellular networks, intercellular associations in tissues and organs, to networks underlying complex functions of entire organisms. Studies related to disease are only considered if they allow new insights into fundamental biological mechanisms.

The HFSP does not support:

- Projects that involve only large-scale, systematic genome mapping or proteomics analyses.
- Applied research e.g. in a clinical context, in engineering, biotechnology, or nanotechnology.
- Research to alleviate a medical condition, e.g. developing methods of treatment and diagnosis, searching and testing potential drug candidates or drug targets, advanced trials of drugs under development.
- Research directly concerned with agricultural or environmental problems (crop yield, bioremediation) or studies at the population or ecosystem level.

The HFSP postdoctoral fellowships extend over 3 years. Fellows may interrupt the HFSP support after the second year for up to two years while being funded through other programs or grants of the host supervisor. The third fellowship year can be used as a return fellowship to the home country to prepare the initiation of an independent laboratory. Repatriating HFSP fellows have the opportunity to apply for the

- **HFSP Career Development Award (CDA).** HFSP fellows having completed at least two full years of their fellowship tenure and who are within two years after the end of their fellowship are eligible to apply. The CDA award provides a start up grant of 300K USD over three years to help initiate the first independent laboratory of the former fellow.

II. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants should read these guidelines with great care and pay particular attention to the eligibility criteria and the scientific objectives of the fellowships. Past experience shows that applications fail because candidates or projects do not comply with the specific HFSP requirements mentioned below. If in doubt about the appropriateness of the research project or formal eligibility criteria you should consult the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) and/or contact the [Fellowship Office](#) prior to submitting an application.

Applicants for a LTF or a CDF must meet the following conditions:

- 1) **A candidate who is not from one of the supporting countries** (*see below*) may apply to work only in a research institution in any of the supporting countries.

A candidate from one of the supporting countries can apply to work in a research institution in any country.

To be from one of the supporting countries is defined as being a national of one of the HFSPO supporting countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus (EU part only), Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States of America.

- 2) Applicants may submit an application before receiving their Ph.D. degree. However, at the start of the fellowship, applicants must **have a research doctorate (Ph.D.)** or a doctoral-level degree comparable to a Ph.D. (e.g. a research based M.D. or medical Ph.D.) with equivalent experience in basic experimental research. In order to be eligible, the doctoral degree must have been **awarded on or after 1 September 2006 and at the latest in December 2010**.

If a candidate obtained his/her Ph.D. before 1 September 2006, exceptions are possible if the applicant claims exceptional circumstances for an interruption of his/her scientific career after receiving the Ph.D. Only exceptional circumstances of a personal, non-scientific nature, such as illness, child care, military or civil service will be accepted. These must be described in detail in the application. Please contact the Fellowship Office prior to submitting your application if you are claiming a personal exemption.

- 3) Applicants must have at least one lead author paper either accepted for publication, in press or published, in a peer-reviewed international journal on 10 September 2009. As a lead author, you are either single author, first author or joint first author. In a joint first author paper the applicant may be listed in second place even though he/she has played a primary role. In this case the fact that the first two authors contributed equally to the work must be clearly stated in the published article. The papers must be written in English.

Applicants have to upload electronic copies of their lead author papers when submitting the application form. It is possible to inform the HFSPO Fellowship Office via the website about any papers published or accepted for publication after 10 September 2009. **The deadline for updates of the publication list is 3 December 2009**. Information that has already been submitted electronically must not be duplicated.

Review papers and patent applications are not taken into account. Exceptions will be made if the standard publication practice in a given field or in a particular research institution makes first authorship impossible due to e.g. alphabetical listing of authors. These circumstances must be explained in detail in the application.

The following are grounds for ineligibility:

- 1) Applicants who at the beginning of the fellowship have already spent 12 or more months in the host country or host institution (e.g. during previous exchange visits for collaboration, training, or during the Ph.D.) are not eligible. The combined duration of all previous stays in the host country is taken into account and cannot exceed 12 months at the start of the fellowship. The sole exception to this rule are prior visits in the host country as part of the formal undergraduate education (up to the Bachelor degree level). The earliest possible date to start the HFSP fellowship is 1 April 2010. **Therefore, applicants who started their current postdoctoral work in the host institution/country prior to 1 April 2009 are no longer eligible to apply.**
- 2) Applications will not be accepted from candidates who wish to work again with their former research supervisors, scientific collaborators or scientists with whom they have already co-authored publications.
- 3) Applications will not be accepted from candidates who obtained the Ph.D. degree in the host country of the HFSP fellowship, even if the applicant is not a national of that country.
- 4) Applications to move from one laboratory to another in the same country are not eligible. For those going to institutions that are classified as extraterritorial such as the EMBL (Heidelberg, Germany, Grenoble, France or Monterotondo, Italy), ICPT or ICGEB (both in Trieste, Italy), the country in which the laboratory is located will be taken into account.
- 5) A candidate cannot apply to go to the country of which he/she is a national, even though he/she may have undertaken pre- or post-doctoral studies abroad or obtained his/her Ph.D. in another country.
- 6) Applications to work in a for-profit research environment are not accepted.
- 7) A candidate can only submit one fellowship application for either a Cross-Disciplinary or a Long-Term Fellowship in the same round of awards.
- 8) A host supervisor can only endorse the application of one single candidate in the same round of awards, either a Cross-Disciplinary or a Long-Term Fellowship application. The presence of HFSP fellows from previous award years in the host laboratory is not relevant in this regard. The fact that a scientist is part of an HFSP Research Grant team (Program Grant or Young Investigator Grant) does not prevent him/her to act as host supervisor for a candidate.
- 9) It is not possible to submit parallel applications (for a Short-Term and a Long-Term/Cross-Disciplinary Fellowship) to work with the same host supervisor or at the same host institution.

III. APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The online application forms will be available **end of June/early July 2009** on the HFSP extranet site at <http://extranet.hfsp.org>. Applications must be submitted electronically in time for the annual deadline. **The deadline for password registration and to initialize the online application is 27 August 2009. The deadline for submitting applications for award year 2010 is 10 September 2009 at 16:00 Strasbourg time.**

Before submitting the application, applicants should also upload up to 6 PDF files of their lead author publications. Candidates should not upload manuscripts of papers that are not printed or in press nor mail paper copies of their publications.

Applicants need to notify the HFSP Fellowship Office promptly of any occurring changes of address or email contact after the submission deadline.

Applications will initially be screened by an *ad hoc* scientific committee for formal eligibility and conformity of the proposed research with the scientific objectives of the HFSP. Any application that does not meet key requirements given in these guidelines will not be sent for review and the applicant will be informed shortly after the submission date. Eligible applications will be evaluated by members of the HFSP

Fellowship Review Committee (<http://www.hfsp.org/how/ListRC.php?type=2>) based on the following criteria:

- The training potential of the fellowship based on the degree of the proposed change in research direction from the candidate's previous work. For both types of fellowships a clear change in research area is viewed favourably (see Frequently Asked Questions).
- The accomplishments and potential of the candidate relative to previous and current opportunities in terms of career stage and field of research.
- The quality of the host and the host environment.
- The scientific originality and excellence of the proposal.
- The information given by the candidate regarding his/her motivation, goals and achievements.

HFSP does not impose a percentage weighting among the individual selection criteria listed above. The final selection considers all individual criteria on an equal basis. Fellowships are only awarded to applications that are ranked 'outstanding', while applications in the next lower rank ('excellent') are awarded only if funds permit (see table below). Each application is initially evaluated by two reviewers assigning categorical rankings. In a second step a shortlist of the highest ranking applications is discussed during a 3-day panel meeting. **Applicants not listed for the final discussion of the review committee will receive a written notification end of January 2010. All other applicants will receive written notification regarding the outcome of the competition by the end of March 2010.** The list of successful candidates will be published on the HFSP website. The selection process is confidential; no information can be provided about the rating of applications or the reasons for not being selected.

RANK	DESCRIPTION
OUTSTANDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel and innovative research project of high quality proposed by candidate • Accomplished candidate • Significant departure from the previous research in terms of topic, technology and species/study system
EXCELLENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Novel and innovative research project proposed by candidate • Accomplished candidate • Lesser degree of change in research direction
VERY GOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality research project but not entirely original (lab project) • Solid candidate • Minor change in research direction (e.g. applying new techniques to the same species/study system; extension of Ph.D. or previous postdoc project)
GOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality science but lack of originality (applicant continues a lab project) • No change in research direction (continuation of Ph.D. project)
FAIR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable project but of less significance
POOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project scientifically flawed or inappropriate

The HFSP fellowship committee reviews a submitted proposal on the basis of the specific research project which is to be carried out in a particular host laboratory. Therefore changes related to the research project or host institution during the selection process can only be considered if due to special circumstances.

V. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

HFSP Fellowships provide support for a period of three years. A renewal is not possible. Former awardees (Long-Term or Cross-Disciplinary) cannot apply for a second time.

A successful candidate cannot hold concurrently a Long-Term or Cross-Disciplinary Fellowship provided by the HFSP and a paid fellowship or employment position (i.e. salary support) from another organization. The awardees must devote themselves entirely to research in the host institutions and may not engage in any other paid activity without the agreement of the HFSP. It is however acceptable that the host (institution) supplements the awardee's salary if the HFSP living allowance is lower than the institutional minimum postdoctoral salary.

Fellows may begin their fellowship on **1 April 2010 at the earliest** and **not later than 1 January 2011**.

Generally it is not possible to change the host supervisor, the research topic, or to transfer the fellowship to another institution. Any unauthorized change will lead to the immediate termination of the award. Fellows who consider a change or transfer due to exceptional circumstances should contact the Fellowship Office directly before making any decision.

Advisory notice on social security benefits and taxation

The HFSP values the uniqueness of stipends vs. employment contracts for international research scholars. Therefore it maintains the policy that mandatory contributions for social security charges (i.e. retirement plans, unemployment insurance, ...) cannot be deducted from its fellowship allowances. HFSP fellows may only use their living allowance to pay for their health insurance should this not be covered by the host institution. HFSP advises all applicants to clarify this in advance. If awarded a fellowship from HFSP, the fellow, host supervisor and host institution must sign the following acceptance form:

Mandatory contributions for retirement benefits or unemployment insurance cannot be deducted from the allowances provided by the HFSP fellowship. Only health insurance may be paid from the HFSP living allowance. Should a host institution or a country require postdoctoral researchers to be administered under specific terms incurring additional charges for the fellows, it is necessary that these charges be covered by institutional or other national funds since these are not eligible for deduction from the HFSP stipend.

The fellowship payments will be activated only after receipt of the signed acceptance form. Applicants should contact the host institution/supervisor well in advance to assure that the HFSP policy on stipends is accepted as is.

Thus far the HFSP has supported fellows from over 60 different nationalities working in many different host countries. It is impossible for us to be informed about income tax regulations of all these countries, all the more so that these regulations may change from one year to the next. This is why the HFSP Fellowship Office is not able to answer any questions regarding tax liability. **Each fellow is responsible for determining his/her own tax liability status in the host/home countries** by contacting appropriate authorities.

Living, family support and child allowances

Both fellowships provide a living allowance, a research/travel allowance, plus other allowances as requested by the fellow or depending on the fellow's family situation (see chart on page 7). These allowances vary depending on the country of destination and are paid in 6 months instalments. The family support allowance is paid if the fellow has (a) child(ren) and/or is married and the spouse has no income. The marriage certificate, birth certificate(s) of the child(ren) and a declaration on the spouse's income must be submitted after notification of award. The family support allowance is paid only once per family regardless of the number of dependents. Fellows with children are also entitled to receive a child allowance for each of their children, as a contribution towards the cost of day care.

Research and travel allowance

A yearly research and travel allowance is provided to cover the expenses for materials and supplies which are needed specifically for the performance of the fellow’s research and which cannot be provided by the host institute. Subscription to scientific journals or books, memberships in scientific or professional organizations as well as publication costs (e.g. editing costs and page charges) are accepted as research expenses. Funds to support participation in scientific/academic meetings and travel costs associated with collaborators in different institutions are included in this allowance.

The research and travel allowance cannot be used to cover health insurance costs or to pay for (income) taxes or other institutional overheads.

Language training allowance

A language training allowance may be requested for the first year. This allowance provides funds for the fellow to learn the language of the country in which the host institution is located.

Parental leave

HFSP Fellows have the possibility to apply for up to 3 months paid parental leave during the course of their fellowship. The payment of the living allowance will be continued during this time and the duration of the fellowship will be extended for a corresponding period.

Relocation allowance

This allowance is a fixed amount aimed at covering the costs of travel of fellow and family members and shipping of personal effects to and from host country (see chart below). Fellows are entitled to receive the relocation allowance only if they move to the host institution no more than 3 months prior to the start of the HFSP fellowship. Fellows choosing to use the third year of support for repatriation will be entitled to the relocation allowance to return to their home country. Fellows remaining at the host institution may request a relocation allowance if their move takes place within 6 months after terminating the fellowship.

2010 RELOCATION ALLOWANCE (in USD)

FROM:	TO:							
	West USA/Canada	East USA/Canada	Europe	Middle-East	Asia	Oceania	Africa	Central & South America
West USA/Canada	1,500	1,500	3,000	3,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,500
East USA/Canada	1,500	1,500	2,000	2,000	2,500	2,500	1,500	1,500
Europe	3,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	4,000	4,000	1,000	3,000
Middle-East	3,000	2,000	1,000	●	3,800	3,800	1,600	3,000
Asia	2,000	2,500	4,000	3,800	●	2,200	3,000	2,500
Oceania	2,000	2,500	4,000	3,800	2,200	●	4,000	2,000
Africa	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,600	3,000	4,000	●	3,000
Central and South America	1,500	1,500	3,000	3,000	2,500	2,000	3,000	●

- Relocation allowances from/to other areas will be calculated on a case-by-case basis.

For a family, the following calculations will be used:

- Spouse: same basic allowance
- Child 2-12 years: 50% of basic allowance
- Child under 2 years: 10% of basic allowance

2010 PERSONAL ALLOWANCES (in local currency)

COUNTRY	Currency	Living allowance (per year)	Family support allowance (per year)	Child allowance (per year)	Research and travel allowance (per year)	Language training allowance (first year only)
Argentina	ARS	71,400	7,140	3,576	20,000	3,000
Australia	AUD	60,900	6,090	3,048	10,000	1,500
Austria	EUR	39,200	3,920	1,956	6,000	1,000
Belgium	EUR	39,200	3,920	1,956	6,000	1,000
Brazil	BRL	84,000	8,400	4,200	19,000	1,500
Canada	CAD	48,300	4,830	2,412	9,000	1,500
China	CNY	210,000	21,000	10,500	61,000	5,500
Denmark	DKK	347,700	34,770	17,388	57,000	8,500
Finland	EUR	46,800	4,680	2,340	6,000	1,000
France	EUR	37,600	3,760	1,884	6,000	1,000
Germany	EUR	37,800	3,780	1,896	6,000	1,000
Greece	EUR	27,800	2,780	1,392	6,000	1,000
India	INR	1,260,000	126,000	63,000	294,000	35,000
Ireland	EUR	39,900	3,990	1,992	6,000	1,000
Israel	ILS	142,100	14,210	7,104	33,000	4,000
Italy	EUR	33,500	3,350	1,680	6,000	1,000
Japan	JPY	6,027,000	602,700	301,356	982,000	159,000
Korea	KRW	30,450,000	3,045,000	1,522,500	7,445,000	771,000
Luxembourg	EUR	39,300	3,930	1,968	6,000	1,000
Mexico	MXN	264,600	26,460	13,236	73,000	7,000
New Zealand	NZD	74,100	7,410	3,708	12,000	1,500
Norway	NOK	377,900	37,790	18,900	62,000	9,500
Poland	PLN	95,000	9,500	4,740	27,000	2,000
Portugal	EUR	27,000	2,700	1,356	6,000	1,000
Spain	EUR	31,800	3,180	1,596	6,000	1,000
Sweden	SEK	429,500	42,950	21,480	70,000	11,000
Switzerland	CHF	73,200	7,320	3,660	9,000	1,300
The Netherlands	EUR	39,200	3,920	1,956	6,000	1,000
UK	GBP	24,700	2,470	1,236	4,000	750
USA	USD	39,900	3,990	1,992	6,500	1,000

The HFSPO reserves the right to review the fellowship stipend levels.
For information concerning the amounts of allowances in other countries please contact the Fellowship Office.

V. PUBLICATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Results of research funded by the HFSP must be published promptly in internationally recognized scientific journals. **An acknowledgement of support by the Human Frontier Science Program** must be included in any publication resulting from work carried out under the Fellowship, including abstracts presented to congresses. A PDF file of each publication should be sent to the HFSP Fellowship Office.

The assignment of intellectual and industrial property rights generated from research conducted under the HFSP will be determined by the parties concerned (researchers, their research organizations or institutions) on a case-by-case basis. The HFSP will not assert any claim to the intellectual and industrial property rights. When a collaborative program is conducted between laboratories in different countries, agreement on the ownership of such rights, or on the distribution of income derived from them, will be negotiated between the collaborating laboratories/institutions. The HFSP will not claim any intellectual or commercial property rights that may be generated through the research it sponsors, nor will it become involved in any disputes which may arise about the ownership of such rights.

VI. BIOETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The HFSP requires that the awardee(s) observe the highest ethical standards in conducting all research sponsored by the Organization. In accepting an award from the HFSP, awardees and host supervisors agree to conform strictly to the codes of practice, regulations and laws which govern the ethical conduct of scientific research in their own laboratories/institutions. They are solely responsible if any of these regulations are infringed. Furthermore they also agree not to undertake any research jointly with scientists in another country where experimental procedures which are forbidden in their own laboratories/institutions are permissible.

VII. LIABILITY FOR DAMAGE

The HFSP will assume no responsibility for any damage or injury to awardees in connection with research conducted under the HFSP Long-Term or Cross-Disciplinary Fellowship. In accepting a fellowship award from the HFSP, awardees release the HFSP of all liability for any damage or injuries which may occur while carrying out the funded research project.