

Guidelines for applicants for the HFSP Accelerator Grants 2025

Opening of application site: early July 2024

Deadline: 24 September 2024

Announcement of awards: March 2025

1. Objectives of the HFSP Accelerator Grants

The aim of the Human Frontier Science Program is to promote, through international cooperation, basic research focused on the elucidation of the sophisticated and complex mechanisms of living systems, for the benefit of all humankind. It aims to complement, not duplicate, the frontier life science programs of the countries that financially support HFSP.

HFSP attaches highest importance to novelty, scientific merit, internationality, and interdisciplinarity. The aim of this new instrument is, to make HFSP supported research more inclusive by integrating scientists working in countries that have been less well represented in HFSP grants, into a working team, and through the team into the larger HFSP community. The new accelerator team members support both the growth of the HFSP research community, becoming more inclusive, equitable and diverse, and the integration of researchers from underrepresented countries while still upholding the rigor of the HFSP review process. Complementarity of the research team, synergy of expertise and activities and added value for the HFSP project will be important aspects in the selection of awardees.

The call for Accelerator Grants 2025 is restricted to HFSP Research Grant teams – Program or Early Career awarded in March 2024. They are invited to apply for an HFSP Accelerator Grant allowing the integration of one additional member into the project. **The new member must be working in a research institution in one of the following countries:** (India, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa). **Only scientists working in one of these eligible countries can be invited to join an existing HFSP grant team.**

If awarded, the accelerated teams will receive 100 000 USD per year in addition to the awarded Research Grant sum, for the years 2 and 3 of the grant. The team will be asked to decide about the exact distribution of the enlarged award sum keeping in mind that the accelerator team member should have the means to also develop their laboratory and purchase the instrumentation required to do the proposed work.

2. Summary of the application and review process

HFSP developed a new application and review process for this new grant; applications are to be submitted through the HFSP application site at ProposalCentral (see [here](#) for more details) by the PI of a newly awarded grant team, on behalf of the entire team. If other members of the team have established or hold the contact to the new member, they can be given access to edit the application.

The [proposal](#) has to contain an abstract and a research plan describing the new sub-project, outlining how this research and the new member will add value to the project. In addition to contributing to the research plan, the accelerator team member needs to provide information (CV and publications, in the same format as regular team members did in the Research Grant proposal) and sign the application together with the PI of the team. A signature from an institutional official of the new member's institution is also required.

The application deadline is **24 September 2024**. Applications will be evaluated by the Research Grant Review Committee, which will discuss and rank them at their regular meeting in January 2025. The HFSP Board of Trustees will take a funding decision before the end of March 2025, and when awarded, the accelerator team member joins the team starting with year 2 of the original Research Grant period. The team is awarded an additional 100 000 USD per year.

3. Eligibility and evaluation criteria

The aim of the HFSP Accelerator Grants is a more equitable spread of the benefits of HFSP grants. Therefore, only scientists working in one of the eligible countries (India, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa) can be recruited to a team, in the framework of the HFSP Accelerator Grant. For detailed eligibility criteria for accelerator team members see [here](#).

In short:

- The accelerator team members have to pursue the work on the grant project in an eligible country during the entire period of the award. By contrast to the regular HFSP Research Grants, in the case of a move to a non-eligible country, funds related to the Accelerator Grant should be spent at the original institution.
- Teams which already have one member from one of the eligible countries can apply to add a second member from that country or from another eligible country.
- Teams that have two members from one of the countries cannot apply to add a third member from the same country.
- A team cannot have two members working at the same institution (university/research institution). Applications for adding a second member from the same institution will be considered ineligible.

For accelerator team members, the same general criteria apply as for the regular team members of Research Grants – Program. They must have an independent group leader position and be able to decide about their own research direction and budget. Post-docs are not eligible. The main criteria of HFSP peer review, including that of HFSP Accelerator Grants, is the scientific quality of the proposed research and its potential to extend scientific frontiers.

Reviewers are instructed to evaluate whether the new project component is “frontier”, adding significant expertise and complementary approaches to the originally awarded project; whether the new member is adding to the interdisciplinarity and capable to do that project component; whether the new member will be integrated well into the team and thus, benefit from the participation. Based on these criteria, the reviewers will decide whether to recommend the proposal for funding.

4. Distribution of funds among team members

The HFSP Accelerator Grant is awarded to the team and thus, the award sum is added to their annual budget from the second year onwards. While the team will be asked to decide about the distribution of the funds, as in the first year, it is expected that the accelerator team member will be treated equally to the other team members. Somewhat uneven distribution of funds may be acceptable, for instance if one member needs to purchase equipment in one year, if a jointly supervised student is paid by one institution or in similar cases but will have to be approved by the Director of Research Grants.

5. Award conditions, agreement and use of funds

The same award conditions as for the regular Research Grant apply. An agreement will have to be signed by the accelerator team member and their institution. The same general rules as for the Research Grants apply, including for overhead (max 10% of the direct costs). Scientists in for-profit organizations may not receive any funds. Scientists working in institutions with mixed status can receive funds. If the institution has a mixed status and receives both public and private funds, it is necessary that the HFSP project does not overlap with a project sponsored by a private company and that there is a project-by-project accounting.

A budget is **not** required. The following information is provided to allow new team members to understand which expenditures are permitted in case an award is made.

Equipment

Purchase of larger equipment is possible but must be essential for the proposed project.

Materials and supplies

Costs of reagents, animals, disposables, computer software necessary for the scientific collaboration.

Services

Consulting services and computer services *specific to the project*, including rental fees (fees for computer or telephone networks may be included in the indirect costs).

Salaries

No salary support (including summer salaries) for the Principal Applicant, Co-Applicant or other faculty, institutional staff such as secretaries or laboratory managers, and no student tuition fees may be paid. Salaries may be provided for research assistants (post-doctoral scientists, graduate students, technicians) essential for the new collaborative project.

Communication expenses

Publication costs (including [open access](#) fees), article translations, mail, express courier services.

Travel and per diem

- Travel costs and per diem allowances (up to three months each year), for team members and their personnel visiting other team members.
- Travel costs and per diem allowances for fieldwork or visits to research facilities.
- Scientific meetings or training courses related to the HFSP project.
- Costs for attending the annual awardee meeting organized by the HFSP.

Indirect costs (overheads)

No more than 10% of the direct costs of the award, at each research institution, may be used for indirect costs.

6. Ethical considerations

Awardees must observe the highest ethical standards in conducting all research supported by the Program. If awarded, all team members have to agree to conform strictly to the national and institutional codes of practice, regulations and laws, which govern the ethical conduct of scientific research in their own institution. Institutions must inform HFSP if national or institutional codes of practice, regulations, or laws have been infringed in the performance of the award. All awardees must 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. Examples of national guidelines can be found via links on [Good Scientific Practice](#) or [HFSP's policy on scientific misconduct](#) available on the HFSP website.

7. Intellectual property rights and publications

HFSP will not claim any intellectual or commercial property rights that may be generated through the research it sponsors. HFSP will not become involved in any dispute which may arise about the ownership of such rights. The assignment of any such rights (and any income arising from them) is to be determined by the procedures and regulations which apply in the laboratory/institution in which the research is conducted.

In considering the possible commercial importance of discoveries which arise from research sponsored by the Program, all awardees must agree that submission of manuscripts for publication of these discoveries in scientific journals will not be delayed for more than 45 working days after the manuscript is completed. An acknowledgement of support by the Human Frontier Science Program must be included in all publications resulting from work carried out under the grant.

8. Reports

The accelerator team member, as all Grant team members, has to submit a final financial report at the end of the grant period. Awarded teams will include the project component added through the HFSP Accelerator Grant and the new team member in the annual scientific reports and in the final scientific report, and accelerator team member will be requested to fill specific sections in these reports.