

ACADEMIE UNIVERSITAIRE LOUVAIN

FONDS SPECIAUX DE RECHERCHE

Incoming post-doctoral Fellowships co-funded by the Marie Curie Actions of the European Commission

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS 2012

1. Aim of the action

The stimulation of international mobility and the attraction of researchers from abroad is one of the priorities of the European Research Area.

The *Académie universitaire Louvain* (AUL) is contributing to this objective by granting post-doc fellowships to highly qualified foreign scientists inviting them to work in a Belgian research team during a certain period of time. The ultimate aim is to establish S&T collaborations and lasting networks between the respective research teams.

2. Eligible scientists

The AUL Incoming post-doc Fellowships are addressed to::

- experienced researchers, holding a doctor's degree or have a similar research experience *;
- researchers with more than 6 years of research experience** (after obtaining the PhD) will not be eligible;
- not having spent more than 12 months, out of the last 3 years in Belgium
- submissions must be done jointly with an AUL promoter/scientist in charge (see 5)

** Experienced researchers are defined as researchers having at least 4 years of research experience (full-time equivalent) since gaining a university diploma giving them access to doctoral studies (the degree must entitle the holder to embark on doctoral studies, without having to acquire any further qualifications), in the country in which the degree/diploma was obtained or researchers already in possession of a doctoral degree, independently of the time taken to acquire it.*

*** Reference date being the starting date of the fellowship.*

3. Duration of the stay: from 12 to 24 months

4. Research fields and potential host units

The considered exchanges must take place in the frame of the ongoing research activities taking place in a research unit of one of the 4 Universities composing the *Académie universitaire Louvain*, namely:

- Université Catholique de Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve or Brussels (Woluwé)): www.uclouvain.be
- Facultés Universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix – Namur: www.fundp.ac.be
- Facultés Universitaires Catholiques de Mons: www.fucam.ac.be
- Facultés Universitaires Saint Louis – Brussels: www.fusl.ac.be

5. Submission of applications

The application forms are introduced to the -Académie universitaire Louvain (crec-ads@uclouvain.be) by the AUL promoter/scientist in charge and have to be accompanied by:

- a list of scientific publications of the candidate;
- a description of the research project to be performed during the stay;
- a recommendation letter by an academic member of the home institution of the candidate underlining the added value of the stay ;
- a recommendation letter by an internationally recognized scientific personality (other than referees mentioned in question 28 of the application form) ;
- a motivation letter by the AUL project leader.

Only complete applications will be taken into consideration.

6. Evaluation and selection

The selection will be operated in two steps and following the evaluation criteria listed below:

Selection criteria	Weight
<p>Quality of the candidate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the scientific merits of the candidates: curriculum vitae, publications... • Importantly, in case of a <i>career break</i>, the circumstances are taken into account 	40%
<p>Quality of the research project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feasibility of the project in the proposed time ; • method ; • potential impact ; • linkage with the ongoing activities of the host unit; • relevance to the expertise of the candidate; 	40%
<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the added value of the stay for the candidates and for the host unit (support promising young research teams and to reinforce excellence poles by giving the opportunity to welcome high level post-doctoral researchers) 	20%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the career perspectives of the candidates after their stay in Belgium (the possibility of returning to the country of origin and/or career perspectives inside the AUL) • the potential transfer of know-how and prospects for further cooperation. 	
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1. Evaluation by external peer reviewers.

Each applicant is requested to give the name of two potential international peer reviewers. The considered expert must at least have a leading scientific position (head of a research unit), be recognized in his field of expertise and possess a sufficient knowledge of the international dimension of research.

The Programme managers will choose one of the two proposed experts and ask him to evaluate the project, following the above-mentioned evaluation criteria.

Another external peer reviewer will be identified by the programme manager and will evaluate the proposal in the same way.

2. Selection committee

The Research Councils of the Universities member of the *Académie universitaire Louvain* will perform the final ranking of the proposal. The ranking will be based on the evaluations performed by external peer reviewers and on the evaluation performed by its members.

The list of ranked proposals will determine 3 categories:

- A - priority list: excellent quality proposals, retained for funding
- B - reserve list: excellent or very good quality proposals, that cannot be funded due to budget limitation. The best B will be kept as B+ and will be funded if budget is available (withdrawing or budget restrictions from the priority list)
- C - rejection list: other proposals, that will not be funded

The results are communicated by letter to the candidates via the host units' promoters and also directly to the candidate researcher.

An evaluation summary report (ESR) is sent to the candidates, explaining reasons for retaining or rejection as well as the strong and weak points of the proposal

The selected candidates should start their research stay not later than 12 months after the deadline of the call for proposals.

7. Budgetary aspects

Depending on the duration of the stays of candidates retained for funding, about 40 years of fellowships will be granted each year.

The fellowship comprises:

- a net monthly allowance, taking into account the experience of the fellow* ;
- a bench fee of 5,000 eur/year for laboratory-based research or 2,500/year for non-laboratory based research;
- the personal liability insurance costs;
- the contribution to the National Office of Social Security (NOSS), as foreseen by the Royal Decree of 26.03.2003 in relation to foreign workers (M. B. of 28.04.2003).

*the following table show the evolution of the net monthly allowance according to the working experience:

years of experience (after PhD)	net monthly allowance (for 2011)*
0	2,105 EUR
2	2,170 EUR
4	2,207 EUR
6	2,263 EUR

The Royal Decree of 07.01.1989 foresees that fellowships to scientists are free of taxation when paid by the Belgian authorities or institutions such as universities.

*Belgium being one of the few EU countries where wages are automatically linked to the cost of living, these amounts are indexed regularly.

8. Legal and administrative aspects and support to researchers

Researchers can contact the Louvain International Desk (LID) to get support regarding all legal and administrative aspects (visa application, work permit, etc...) but also for accommodation, language courses, child care facilities,... (www.uclouvain.be/lid)

The LID is member of EURAXESS, the European Services Network, which is a network of more than 200 centres located in 35 European countries. If you are a mobile researcher, EURAXESS Services can assist you and your family in every step of your move, starting in your home country and continuing until you have settled in a new one. This free personalised service is here to remove red tape and make your life easier. You will receive comprehensive, up-to-date information, as well as customised assistance on all matters relating to your professional and daily life.

You can find the nearest EURAXESS Services Centre of the French-speaking Community of Belgium on: www.euraxess-cfwb.be.

9. Reports

9.1 Mid-term report

At mid-term, the fellowship holder, in concertation with the AUL promoter(s), has to report in brief (maximum 3 pages) to the *Research Administration (ADRE)* about the progress of the research activities, potential difficulties and perspectives. For fellowships up to 12 months only a final report is due.

9.2 Final report

At the end of the stay, a more detailed but still short activity report (maximum 5 pages) is written.

The aim of the report is to assess if the objectives of the post-doctoral stay are met. It is thus not a pure scientific report. The project leader will point out in how far the objectives were met. He also will give an appreciation about the added value of the stay in relation to the researcher, the host unit and the prospects for further collaboration. Guidelines for reporting are sent to all grantees. A list of publications, missions and contributions to scientific meetings also has to be added.

10. Publications

Every publication or event connected with the research stay should mention that the concerned author is beneficiary of an FSR Incoming Post-doctoral Fellowship of the *Académie universitaire Louvain*, co-funded by the Marie Curie Actions of the European Commission.

For further particulars contact

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