

ERS Short-Term Research Training Fellowships 2013 Rules & Regulations

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1. General description & eligibility criteria

1.1. Aims

- a. The ERS is funding a Short-Term Research Training Fellowship programme with the aims of:
 - Promoting training to be applied in research on respiratory medicine in Europe;
 - Supporting the exchange in Europe of scientists/investigators as well as clinicians actively involved in research in respiratory medicine;
 - Contributing to the transfer and implementation of new research techniques or methodologies in Europe and internationally.
 - Stimulating postgraduate and doctoral career development for physicians and allied health care professionals in the area of respiratory research in Europe.
- b. Fellowships are funded by the ERS with the objectives of enabling scientists, investigators and clinicians and allied healthcare professionals, to carry out basic or clinical **research projects** and to develop, acquire and apply new skills, advanced **research** procedures and techniques in the area of respiratory medicine. At the current level of funding, the ERS Scientific Committee selects about 15 grants annually.
- c. Fellowships are established to advance respiratory medicine and science by helping scientists and clinicians **to visit another research laboratory or clinical unit in a different country with the aim of learning a research technique not available in the Home Institute, and to which they did not have access before. The project may involve basic experimental studies, clinical investigations, epidemiology or any other research area with relevance to respiratory medicine.**
- d. Fellowships are intended **to foster basic and advanced research as well as to support applications which are presented as a training component of a central robust research project** (e.g. apply advanced research, test a hypothesis in pilot study, innovate a clinical technique, set up methods to be applied for clinical research at the Home Institute).
- e. **ERS Fellowships are not granted for purely clinical and educative training (clinical diagnostic procedures, therapeutic interventional procedures, treatment, etc.), thus it is a mandatory requirement that the projects include major “research components”. Accordingly, research training projects should lead to research activities and developments during the Fellowship, and after the training period when returning to the Home Institute, which need to be outlined in the project description.**
- f. The ERS Fellowships schemes offer the opportunity for the exchange of a candidate between two groups, from a home unit of origin to a receiving host unit, collaborating with an individual research project which is to be carried out in a hosting centre located in a different country in Europe. **Therefore when applying, applications must already involve an agreement with the host unit.**
- g. **ERS Fellowships are not granted for undergraduate studies, workshops, courses, lectures, meetings, conferences, congresses or for visiting institutions without a clear research project to be completed.**

Please note that the following eligibility criteria which apply under articles 1.2. to 1.8. for the standard ERS Short-Term Research Fellowships may differ or be completed by other additional criteria for the Specific Fellowships under section 2:

- 2.1. International Short-Term Research Training Fellowship
- 2.2. ERS Fellowship in memory of Walther Guerrero Ciquero
- 2.3. Joint Fellowship with the Italian National Society AIMAR
- 2.4. ERS PAH Fellowship Programme in the broad field of pulmonary circulation
(supported by an unrestricted grant by GlaxoSmithKline)
- 2.5. Joint Fellowship with EMBO in the respiratory and broad field of molecular biology

1.2. Recipients' profile

a. Qualifications & Experience

- a. Candidates should be currently engaged in respiratory research/science/practice that is relevant to respiratory medicine; they must possess appropriate scientific, medical and/or professional qualifications and experience according to the specific Fellowship applied for.
- b. Applicants must be **postgraduates holding a university degree in any field related to respiratory medicine/science (MD, MSc, PhD, MD-PhD) or equivalent (immunologists, biologists, geneticists, pharmacologists, biophysicists, chemists, etc.)**. As a minimum requirement applicants need to have graduated with an MD, MSc or equivalent at the time of application. In addition candidates may also be **qualified healthcare professionals (non-MD) working in respiratory medicine/health** (nurses, physiotherapists, respiratory function technologists, allied respiratory professionals).
- c. Candidates must have adequate fluency in a language that permits effective communication at the Host Institute.

b. Age

The ERS **does not apply an upper age-limit** on candidates as an eligibility criterion, however applicants should be in the early-stages of their research career; furthermore younger applicants will be prioritized.

c. Geographic origin

The programme is open to **both European and non-European based candidates to apply for a fellowship in a foreign country in Europe** (except for the International Research Training Fellowship, which enables Europe-based scientists to go into a non-European country).

d. Membership

Candidates **must be ERS members** in order to be entitled to apply for an ERS Short-Term Research Fellowship. Candidates under 35 years can benefit the "Under 35 Silver" membership which is free of charge (<http://www.ersnet.org/options-fees-entitlements.html>).

1.3. Mobility scheme

- a. The Host Supervisor must be located in a foreign European country other than the candidate's own (except for the International Short-Term Research Training Fellowships – please refer to section 2.1).
- b. ERS Fellowships **are normally not awarded for exchanges between two units within the same country**. Indeed the aim of the ERS is to promote international research, it follows that mobility is a crucial element in deciding the eligibility of an application. **On a case by case basis the ERS may accept applications within the same country if a strong mobility component (distance factor) is given.**
- c. **On completion of the Fellowship applicants must return to their Home laboratory; the goal being to directly apply the acquired skills back at the Home Unit. A robust research plan back Home/project details and work plan to be outlined in the project description will be a pre-requisite.**
- d. **Candidates should not have been already at the host institute for more than 6 months at the time of application.** Candidates who have already been in the Host Institute for less than 6 months at the time of application will be judged more severely. **In general, ERS Fellowships should not be used to extend a previous stay at the same Host Unit or in the same Host Country. The aim is to generate opportunities enabling the candidate to learn new techniques in order to develop a career, to have access to a new working environment, and not to continue an established collaboration.**

1.4. Mandatory return to the Home Institute

- a. In order to enable such knowledge transfer, the awards are **conditional on the return of the Fellow to the Home Institute at the end of the Fellowship and completion of project**. The Fellowships are also **conditional on the availability of appropriate facilities, resources and funds at the Home Institute** to apply and implement the newly acquired research techniques or research results.
- b. Candidates must have a **clear formal connection/link to the Home Institute, to which they will return to at the end of the Fellowship**. This connection (employment, under staff payroll, PhD studentship, etc.) will be testified in the Home Supervisor's release form.
- c. The ERS will accept applications pending that the **research competences to be acquired** in the Host Institute **are not available in the Home Institute**.
- d. A statement of the Home Supervisor confirming that facilities, funds and resources will be made available to the Fellow upon return; in order to enable him/her to conduct research activities/projects back at the Home Unit will be requested. **A clear research plan back at the Home Unit will need to be outlined in the project description**.

1.5. Selection of the Host Institute

- a. All applications must involve a Home Institute of origin and a receiving Host Institute. **When applying, the applications must already involve an agreement with the hosting/receiving Institute where the fellowship will be carried out**. A fellowship project should normally specify only one Institute as Host unit and only one project title.
- b. It is the responsibility of the Fellow to find a Host Supervisor willing to Host him/her and to find an adequate research project description (ERS does not prospect for these).
- c. Fellowships are **conditional on the availability of appropriate infrastructures, facilities, resources and funds to carry out the research project at the Host Unit**.
- d. **The quality of the selected Host Institute and its adequacy in relation to the suggested research project are important criteria which will be assessed during the reviewing and selection procedure of applications**.
- e. The proposal should elaborate on **how the partnership between the Host and the candidate would take full advantage of the unique facilities, resources, and materials available in their respective Host and Home Units**. It should also be indicated in the project description **how the new research techniques will be relevant to the career of the applicant and to research in respiratory medicine in the Home Institute**. The initiation or development of collaborative projects between the Host and Home Institutes are encouraged.
- f. The project description outlining in detail the research project which you will carry out at the Host Unit, needs to be worked out with the contribution of all three parties involved (applicant, Home Supervisor, Host Supervisor). In order to ensure that the application carries the endorsement of the Home/Host Supervisor, the latter will need to provide their CV (including supporting grants) and publication list as indicated in the mandatory application files. A statement of the Host Supervisors' interest in the candidate and confirmation that he/she is qualified to carry out the project will be requested.
- g. ERS Fellows are encouraged to engage in teaching, discussion and similar activities of the institution they visit. **They may not, however, engage in any paid or salaried activities, which are not related to the ERS research training project, during the course of their Fellowships**.

1.6. Time constraints

a. Start date

- a. The start date of the Fellowship **cannot be set earlier than August 2013 for applications submitted in April** since a granting decision can only be expected on July 2013. **For applications submitted in October the start date of the Fellowship cannot be set earlier than March 2014** since a granting decision can only be expected on February 2014.
- b. The start date should allow sufficient time after the expected date of the funding decision for you to complete travel, visa and passport formalities.
- c. The Fellowships **are not granted in retrospect** for already fully or partly carried out projects.

b. Length of fellowship

- a. ERS Short-Term Research Training Fellowships are intended for work periods **between 1 and 3 months in a foreign country in Europe** (except for the International Research Training Fellowship, which enables Europe-based scientists to go into a non-European country – please refer to 2.1).
- b. The research training project outlined in the Fellowship application is to be carried out **in a continuous time period and may not be split nor reduced**.
- c. It is critical that the research project's plan is realistic and that the research project is **feasible to be completed within the projected time frame**.
- d. The **Scientific Committee reserves the right to reduce this period** depending on the content of the submitted project.
- e. The Fellowship is to be carried out in a **full time basis (100%)** and the Fellow may not be engaged in any paid or salaried activities other than those related to the ERS research project during the course of their Fellowships.

c. Postponement of start date or modification of duration

- a. The Fellowship **should be started within 1 year from the positive notification date at the latest**.
- b. **Once the duration has been agreed between the Host and the Home Institute (set in the application files), it should normally not be changed without approval of the ERS; indeed the outlined project may not be amended once the applications are submitted (if any reduction is accepted by ERS, the grant amount to the Fellow will be reduced accordingly)**.

d. Selection notification

You can usually expect a decision as from the second week of July 2013 for the STRTF submitted in April and as from the second week of February 2014 for the STRTF submitted in October.

1.7. Previous ERS Fellowship(s) recipients

- a. **Applicants who were already awarded an ERS Long-Term Fellowship or two ERS Short-Term fellowships in the past are not eligible.** Candidates having received only once an ERS Short-Term Fellowship are eligible to reapply provided that they are members of the Association of ERS Fellows and that they have provided the ERS with the requested follow-up reports at the end of their Fellowship.
- b. Their application for this STRTF programme will be considered in competition as any other new application on the basis of scientific merit. These should not be too closely similar to the previously granted ERS Fellowship. They will undergo a new selection procedure and no guarantee for funding is available. Applications will have to be submitted by the official Fellowship application deadlines.

1.8. Extension of a previous project supported by other funds

Applications for the extension of a previous project supported from other sources will be considered in competition as any other application on the basis of scientific merit. Applicants should inform the ERS about the **success of the earlier project**, should clearly mention the **new added value (skills, techniques, results) to be acquired and focus on the new benefits to be gained**. Candidates should not have already been at the Host Institute for over 6 months at the time of application deadline.

1.9. Requirements for Host Institute

Host Institute will be requested to ensure the fulfillment of both practical and scientific aspects which are relevant in the beginning (housing, safety), during the completion (regular meetings, evaluations) and at the end/during the follow-up of the Fellowship (please refer to section 5).

- a. The Host Supervisor will be required, before the beginning of the project, to confirm in writing that he/she is prepared to receive the Fellow and to provide the necessary facilities to carry out the research. Written confirmation by the Host should include a starting date of the Fellowship, and a confirmation of the Host Institute's responsibilities which include availability of laboratory and office space; ability to conduct the projected research; and verification that health & safety issues are taken care of. The Host will also be asked to assist the Fellow in housing and other practical issues (e.g. he/she will be directed to the university's housing department).
- b. An important aspect of this written confirmation will be that the Host is requested to assign named persons as scientific and administrative mentors for the Fellow. The first one being responsible for the scientific part of the Fellow's project, whereas the second mentor will be responsible for coaching the Fellow in all matters related to visa requirements, registration with the university, opening a bank account, housing, taxation issues, finding appropriate schools for the Fellow's children, etc.

1.10. Unexpected event or project change after selection

- a. **The implementation of the Fellowship (duration, research project, supervision, location, etc.) should be carried out exclusively as outlined in the submitted Fellowship application and may not be amended.**
- b. **Any event or circumstance which might affect the implementation of the Fellowship or are likely to have an effect on the performance of the Fellowship need to be notified to the ERS at the earliest. Fellowships that are terminated prematurely, must be notified promptly to the ERS and appropriate funds reimbursed.**
- c. If there are any problems, the Fellow has the possibility of reporting these to the ERS, who in such cases will contact the Host in order to try to solve the problems. In extreme circumstances the ERS may decide to prematurely terminate the Fellowship.

Any infringement of the above conditions will result in the withdrawal of an application from the selection process or the cancellation of an award already made.

2. Different and/or additional eligibility criteria for specific Fellowships

Please note that if no different or additional criteria are specifically required for the Specific Fellowships below, the previous eligibility criteria outlined under section 1 still apply and should therefore also be carefully considered.

2.1. General information on the specific fellowships

- a. The specific Fellowships follow the same rules and regulation and will undergo the same reviewing and selection process as ERS Fellowships.
- b. To apply for specific Fellowships, the applicant should use the same online application form as for any other ERS Short-Term Research Training Fellowship application, and provide justification on the application platform when requested. No additional document is required.
- c. The selection will be processed in competition with any other ERS STRTF application and will as such need to pass the threshold of the cut off score in the same way as any other application. In case no submitted applications make it to the top ranking on the basis of scientific merit, no specific Fellowship will be granted that year/round.
- d. The application will be reviewed by the ERS just as any other application. Applications that have been ranked for support from ERS and are eligible for a specific Fellowship will be selected in competition with the other specific Fellowships.
- e. **In case the candidate does not succeed for the specific Fellowship and if top-ranked by the ERS reviewers for funding, he/she will be granted a standard ERS Fellowship.**
- f. Financial support, grant amount settlements and performance obligations of specific Fellowships will be the same as for standard ERS Fellowships. The only difference will be in the title and acknowledgment of endorsement that they will need to include.

2.2. International Short-Term Research Training Fellowship

- a. **International Research Training Fellowships are designed for Europe-based scientists to work outside Europe, provided that the objectives of the research project are not available or attainable in Europe.**
- b. Two International Short-Term Research Training Fellowship can be granted per application deadline.
- c. **The applicant should justify in the project description and on-line form why the research project cannot be completed or attained within a European Institute and why going abroad is essential.**
- d. **The applicant should indicate how the new research techniques / knowledge will be relevant to research in the home unit and implemented back by outlining a clear research project plan upon return in the project description.**

2.3. ERS Fellowship in memory of Walther Guerrero Ciquero

- a. The Short-Term Research Training Fellowship for a research project in the field of tuberculosis, in tribute to the life and work of Dr. Walther Guerrero Ciquero, ERS President's Awardee 2010, is designed for candidates **coming from low-medium income countries (WHO) to work in Europe.** The aim of this Fellowship is to support the training and education in **research** techniques of a **young doctor** in the **field of tuberculosis.**
- b. One ERS Short-Term Research Training Fellowship in memory of Dr. Walther Guerrero Ciquero can be granted per year and will be awarded to a project which carries on in the spirit of Walther Guerrero Ciquero's work.
- c. The only difference with other ERS STRTF application will be in the title and acknowledgment of endorsement that they will need to include ("ERS Walther Guerrero Ciquero Fellowship" instead of simply "ERS Fellowship").
- d. In order for the applicant to show his/her agreement for the application to be selected as an "ERS Walther Guerrero Ciquero Fellowship", the applicant should tick on the box "I apply for the ERS Walther Guerrero Ciquero Fellowship".

2.4. Joint Fellowship with the Italian National Society AIMAR

- a. Fellowships jointly funded by the ERS and national societies are possible in the case of an agreement between the national society and the ERS. An agreement exists with AIMAR (Italy, www.aimarnet.it) for four Short-Term Fellowships a year.
- b. **The candidate may be from Italy going to another European country, or from Europe and overseas going to Italy.** Applicants who are resident in Italy must be members of AIMAR.
- c. The selected applicants will be both ERS Fellows and AIMAR Fellows. They will have to use the title and acknowledgment of endorsement “ERS/AIMAR Joint Fellowship” instead of simply “ERS Fellowship”.
- d. In order for the applicant to show his/her agreement for the application to be selected as a joint Fellowship with the national society AIMAR, the applicant should tick on the box “I accept that my Fellowship is co-funded by AIMAR and carries the title ERS/AIMAR Joint Fellowship”.
- e. Applications that have been ranked for support from ERS and are eligible for AIMAR support may become co-funded Fellowships if they are also approved by AIMAR.

2.5. ERS PAH Fellowships Programme in the broad field of pulmonary circulation (supported by an unrestricted grant by GlaxoSmithKline)

- a. ERS PAH Short-Term Research Fellowship opportunities are awarded to address research in the **broad field of pulmonary circulation (immunology, cardiology, vascular disease, etc.)**. ERS PAH Fellowships are intended to support **clinical research, translational research, basic science and advanced research**.
- b. All nationalities as well as European based and non-European based candidates are eligible. The candidate **must be going to a European country** to carry out the research fellowship project.
- c. Candidates must be postgraduates holding a **university degree in any field** (respiratory medicine/science, immunology, biology, genetics, pharmacology, biophysics, chemistry, etc.) **as long as relevant to the application’s project** (MD, MSc, PhD, or equivalent). As a minimum requirement applicants need to have graduated with an MD, MSc or equivalent at the time of application. In addition candidates may also be **qualified healthcare professionals (non-MD) working in respiratory medicine/health** (nurses, physiotherapists, respiratory function technologists, allied respiratory professionals).
- d. On completion of the Fellowship applicants **must return to their Home Unit**, the aim being to learn, implement and apply back research techniques not already available in the Home Unit. Therefore when applying, applications must have a formal robust link with the Home Unit and already involve an agreement with the Host Unit. The proposal should thus elaborate on how the partnership between the two centres and the candidate will take full advantage of the facilities, resources, know-how and materials available in the respective host and home units. **In particular the research project should indicate how the new research techniques will be relevant to research back in the home unit outlining a clear research plan upon return.**
- e. The ERS PAH Fellowships should evolve around a robust research project which needs to be realistically carried out in the suggested time frame (1 to 3 months projects), and will be centrally outlined in the project description (needs, aim, objectives, hypothesis, methods, workplan, timelines, research plan back home). This can in particular be easily achieved when joining an already running project at the host unit, as the submitted project by the candidate would be sold in an existing environment with available research structures offering the opportunity to learn research techniques. **Moreover the research projects suggested by applicants should lead to research activities and developments after the training period when returning to the home unit.**
- f. The host units in Europe which can be approached by the Home Units and their candidates to complete an ERS PAH Fellowship, can be covered widely with **fundamental research centres, clinical medical centres, and clinical and translational science centres**. **The host centres will evolve in the broad field of pulmonary circulation, as such cardiology centres, immunology centres, vascular centres, amongst others, are eligible for the candidates to apply with.**

- g. Special emphasis will also be put by the reviewers on that the **candidates should be able to improve their clinical techniques during their stay**. Applications in which **pulmonary hypertension educational programmes would be available at the host unit, giving candidates the opportunity to learn and improve clinical techniques and training alongside their project, would be of particular interest**. The online application form includes specific sections for the candidate to clearly outline such a programme onsite; the host units strength and educational/clinical programme offer, as well as a detailed description of techniques which will be relevant and improved while carrying out the research project. **However this clinical education component is not a restrictive one, since e.g. for purely basic science projects or for recognized host units specialized in basic science exclusively, such a requirement would not be relevant and apply**.
- h. Candidates for this fellowship will undergo a **specific selection process**. Their application will be scored by 4 members of the ERS Evaluation Committee and 4 members of the ERS PAH Experts Panel, all of them being selected by the Research Director according to their specific expertise in the field of the received applications and free of any conflicts of interest. The applications will be selected through a peer-review done by all ERS STRTF 2013 reviewers (please refer to the second step review, section 3.2.b.).
- i. The reviewers will pay particular attention to the **applicant's research plan upon return to the Home Unit** (how the new research techniques will be relevant to research back in the home unit).
- j. **Clinical research projects and translational research projects will be favoured.**
- k. The funds for the ERS PAH Fellowships programme are provided *unrestrictedly by GSK to ERS*; the selected candidates will therefore be considered exactly as regular ERS Fellows and will use the title and acknowledgment of endorsement "ERS PAH Fellowship *supported by an unrestricted grant by GSK*".
- l. In order for the applicant to show his/her agreement for the application to be selected as an ERS PAH Fellowship, the applicant should tick on the box "*I understand that the ERS PAH Fellowships are supported by an unrestricted grant by GSK*".
- m. Applications that have been ranked for support from ERS and are eligible for support through the ERS PAH Fellowships Programme scheme may become ERS PAH Fellowships.

2.6. Joint Fellowships with EMBO in the respiratory and broad field of molecular biology

- a. An agreement exists with EMBO (www.embo.org) for up to four Short-Term Research Fellowships a year. The ERS/EMBO joint fellowships should be **basic science fellowships in respiratory science/health with a research project in the field of molecular biology**. It is intended to **bring clinicians into the field of basic science**. Therefore candidates who have a strong clinical background (MDs and MDs-PhDs) will be favoured and prioritized during the selection process.
- b. ERS/EMBO Joint Short-Term Research Fellowships are intended for work periods of **1 to 3 months**.
- c. The candidate must be **from Europe going to a European country**. **At least the home or the host country must be an EMBC member state** (*Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom*).
- d. Candidates should be actively engaged **in research/science/practice that is relevant to respiratory medicine**, and have appropriate scientific or medical qualifications. Candidates must possess appropriate professional qualifications and experience according to the specific Fellowship applied for.
- e. Applicants must be postgraduates holding a **university degree in medicine/ science (MD, MSc, PhD, MD-PhD) that is relevant to the project applied for**. As a minimum requirement, applicants need to have graduated with an MD, MSc or equivalent at the time of application. In addition candidates may also be qualified healthcare professionals (non-MD) working in respiratory

medicine/health (nurses, physiotherapists, respiratory function technologists, allied respiratory professionals).

- f. Candidates should **not have been already at the host institute for more than 7 months at the time of application.**
- g. Candidates will have to provide **supplementary reference forms by the Home Supervisor and by a referee in their home country** during the application process.
- h. ERS/EMBO Fellows will receive a one off travel flat rate for travel costs: €200 for travel up to 500km between the Host and Home units, or €700 for travel above 500km.
- i. The selected applicants will be both ERS Fellows and EMBO Fellows. They will have to use the title and acknowledgment of endorsement “ERS/EMBO Joint Fellowship” instead of simply “ERS Fellowship”.
- j. In order for the applicant to show his/her agreement for the application to be selected as a joint Fellowship with the organization EMBO, the applicant should tick on the box “I accept that my Fellowship is co-funded by EMBO and carries the title ERS/EMBO Joint Fellowship”.
- k. Applications that have been ranked for support from ERS and are eligible for EMBO support may become co-funded Fellowships if they are also approved by EMBO.

3. Guidelines for completing an ERS Fellowship application

3.1. General information on submission

- a. Candidates may submit an application for only **one ERS Fellowship proposal at any application round.**
- b. Applications and all supporting documents must be submitted in English and online by using the following link: <http://www.ersnet.org/ers-funding/fellowships>. Applications **must be received by the ERS office by the application closing dates (normally April 1 and October 1)**; they are accepted and processed twice a year.
- c. Applications will be acknowledged in due time and candidates advised if items are missing.
- d. The allocation of the Fellowship grant is based on **a complete and detailed project description (including work plan & timelines) and application files** to be submitted by the candidate, the Home and the Host Supervisors.
- e. Applications having been previously rejected may be resubmitted and should where possible be improved.

3.2. Selection process

This funding programme is under the responsibility of the ERS Scientific Committee and final decision is the responsibility of the ERS Executive Committee following the recommendations of the Scientific Committee. In order to keep a very high standard of applications, the ERS will strictly enforce the rules for the management of the Fellowships and will ensure the high quality of the work supported.

- a. The selection of candidates for an ERS Fellowship will focus on the scientific merits of the researcher/clinician and is made on the basis of expert evaluation of the application and the proposed work as set out by the candidates in the project description and application files.
- b. Applications will be reviewed by the ERS Evaluation Committee selected by the ERS Scientific Committee in a two step process. In a first step, each application will be graded by a panel of at least 5 experts who are selected by the Research Director as being experienced in their respective fields and none of whom have any conflicts of interest. In a second step, the results of all

reviewing groups will be normalised and the results and applications sent to all reviewers. In a phone conference the final ranking will be discussed.

- c. **The reviewers are required to judge the quality of the candidate, the Home & Host Supervisors/Institutes and the research project. Reviewers also assess the projected benefits to the Home Institute of the candidate (research plan upon return and feasibility of implementation), to the candidate's career and the added value to research.**
- d. **Expert reviewers are asked to grade the Short-Term Research Training Fellowship applications according to the following criteria:**
 1. **Merits of candidate**
 2. **Quality of research project**
(needs, aims, objections, hypothesis, methodology, work plan with timelines, relevance, news value, originality, realistic timeframe, etc.)
 3. **Quality of Host Supervisor/Unit for the project**
 4. **Quality of Home Unit and research plan back**
(quality of research project/development plan upon return, availability of funds/facilities/resources to implement research developments back, projected value/benefits for the Home Institute, added value and feasibility of the transfer of the newly acquired research skills back, etc.)
- e. **The realism of concluding the project within the given time period (1-3 months) is particularly important.** The expert reviewers are asked to grade each individual criterion of the candidate's application using the following grading and their meanings:
 - 5 – Excellent, should be funded with highest priority
 - 4 – Very good, should be funded
 - 3 – Good, could be funded with lesser priority
 - 2 – Average, probably not funded
 - 1 – Poor, should not be funded.An average grade for all criteria is then calculated and will provide the overall score used by the Evaluation Committee as an aid for the final ranking of the applications.
- f. The final decision on candidates' selection for an ERS Fellowship is based foremost on the external reviewers' comments and the calculated overall average score; it is made by the ERS Executive Committee following the recommendation of the ERS Scientific Committee.
- g. No distinction will be made between candidates on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs.
- h. The assessments are strictly confidential and cannot be divulged outside the ERS, or to the candidates themselves.
- i. The decisions are final and appeals are not considered unless formal mistakes have been made by the ERS.

3.3. Project description

- a. **This is the most important component of your application.** It should be prepared by yourself and have the approval of your Home and Host Supervisors, as they will indicate it in their respective forms.
- b. **Based on the information provided online an automatically generated abstract form will summarize your application and project for the reviewers.** This form will address your projects' aim in a few sentences, the objectives, the hypothesis, the methods, the work-plan with timelines, the reasons for selecting the Host Institute/Supervisor, the value of the project for your career and relation to your previous background and qualifications, the added value to research and the value of the project for the Home Institute with a detailed **research project plan back**; in particular a description of the research project/developments' plan back home outlining also evidence of funds/facilities/resources enabling the direct transfer of your newly acquired skills. **For the ERS PAH Fellowships Programme supported by an unrestricted grant by GSK detail of eventual**

clinical training that will be attended, associated and relevant to the research project's needs should be outlined too.

- c. The description **must not exceed 5 pages** (font size 12pts Times Roman or Arial) including references: the four pages may be used to provide details and expand on the factors outlined in the abstract form, and in particular to provide the scientific rationale for the project with key references. **It is critical that the work-plan is clear and realistic and that it supports the fact that the project may be concluded within the projected time frame (1 to 3 months). It is also important to provide evidence that facilities, resources and funds are available for the project at the Host Unit and at the Home Unit upon return to continue the work and/or to apply and disseminate the newly acquired research skills.**

3.4. Home & Host Supervisors' files

- a. Your Home Supervisor needs to provide the ERS with a signed **Form**, which you can download from the online application system. Therefore you should send the form to your Home Supervisor in order for him/her to complete and sign it. Your Home Supervisor's Release Form should confirm the relevance of and the support of your proposed work. It should attest your proficiency in the working language at the proposed Host Institute. It should **authorize your leave of absence during the planned project period** and indicate that, if successful, **a position will be open to you upon completion of the Fellowship. A statement confirming that facilities, funds and resources will be made available to the Fellow upon return, in order to enable him/her to conduct research activities/projects/developments back at the Home Unit will be required.**
- b. The Home Supervisor will be requested to return the form to you, with supporting documents, which include the **Home Supervisor's CV and list of publications, as well as a statement on the candidate's salary status during the ERS Fellowship.**
- c. Your Host Supervisor needs to provide the ERS with a signed **Host Supervisor's Acceptance Form**, which you can download from the online application system. Therefore you should send the form to your Host in order for him/her to complete and sign it. Your Host Supervisor's Acceptance Form should confirm that operational funds, facilities and resources are available for the project. It should also attest the Host Supervisor's commitment to the research project as outlined in the application and provide recommendation for the candidate, as well as ensure supervision.
- d. The Host Supervisor will be requested to return the form to you with supporting documents, which include the **Host Supervisor's CV and list of publications, as well as a statement on the candidate's salary status during the ERS Fellowship.**

3.5. Application process and documents for STRTF

- a. **Application files to be uploaded online:**
1. Candidate's short curriculum vitae (2 pages max)
 2. Candidate's list of publications, sorted in the following order: 1/ original peer-reviewed papers, 2/ review articles and 3/ any other relevant publication (e.g. meeting abstract with relevance to application)
 3. Project description (5 pages max) including references
 4. Host Supervisor's short curriculum vitae (2 pages max, **including strictly up to 10 major supporting grants** in the 5 past years and/or those being of specific interest for the support of the candidate's project)
 5. Host Supervisor's list of publications (3 pages max, with the **10 most important/relevant for this application listed first** - abstracts should not be included)
 6. Home Supervisor's short curriculum vitae (2 pages max, **including strictly up to 10 major supporting grants** in the 5 past years and/or those of specific interest for the support of the candidate's project)
 7. Home Supervisor's list of publications (3 pages max, with the **10 most important/relevant for this application listed first** - abstracts should not be included)

The limitations stated above should be met strictly in the submitted supporting files. Any documents which are longer than the outlined requirements will be truncated inconsiderately by the ERS Office. Applicants should ensure, in their own best interests, that the Home/Host Supervisors' files are also in compliance; and if not, either follow-up with the Supervisors and/or truncate/compile the files on their own in the most appropriate way.

- b. **Based on the information provided on the online application form, a short abstract will be compiled and provided to the reviewers as a synopsis.**

Whether or not a fellowship is awarded depends in large measure on the assessment made by our referees of your submitted online data and application files. Applicants should, therefore, in their own best interests, provide detailed information in the online form and a well-argued research project description which they should write themselves with endorsement of Home & Host Supervisors.

- c. **Supporting documents to be downloaded online and to be sent to the Home/Host Supervisor and Referee for completion. Please request that your Host/Home Supervisor and Referee completes the form, provides his/her mandatory signature and then return it back to you (scanned pdf/jpeg or word with electronic signature) with his/her mandatory supporting documents. After which, please upload your Home Release/Host Acceptance/Reference forms and the Supervisors associated supporting documents online.**

- Home Supervisor's signed release form
- Host Supervisor's signed acceptance form

For the ERS/EMBO joint fellowship only, two supplementary supporting recommendation documents will be requested:

- Home Supervisor's reference letter
- Reference letter by an additional referee from home country

- d. **Supporting documents to be uploaded online:**

- Statement on salary status during the ERS Fellowship by the Host supervisor
- Statement on salary status during the ERS Fellowship by the Home supervisor
- ID digital photo in high resolution (300 dpi)
- Scanned copy of candidate's highest degree (PhD, MD, MSc, etc.)
- Scanned copies of children's (under 16 years of age) birth certificates or candidate's family record book

4. Grant amounts

4.1. Calculation

- a. Grants are funded according to the personal (number of children under 16 years of age) and professional circumstances of the Fellow and the Host country.
- b. The grant amounts are indicated **per month in EURO** (depending on the Host country), for a Fellow not receiving any other sources of income (salary, funding, travel grant, etc.).
- c. A fixed amount per Fellow is calculated for their Fellowship and is set as an ERS Grant amount at the beginning of the research training project. **The Fellowship provides the recipient with a subsistence allowance to cover the Fellow's living costs and a flat rate for travelling expenses to the host Institute.**
- d. The total ERS grant amount should cover travel and accommodation costs and provide enough money to live on during the Fellowship. Therefore only subsistence rates are supported by the ERS grant. **The ERS Fellowship is not intended to cover any expenses other than the ones related to the living expenses in the Host country during the stay.**
- e. A one off travel flat rate of €200 will be granted for distances between Host and Home unit below 5,000km. For distances above 5,000km the one off travel flat rate will be €700.
- f. The Fellowship does not provide the travel costs for the Fellow's family.

4.2. Deductions on grant amount

- a. The standard calculation foresees deducting from the ERS monthly subsistence rate **the monthly salary of the Fellow should he/she still be receiving income from the Home/Host Institutes during his/her Fellowship.** Whether the amount is transferrable to the Host country or not, is not a determining factor in the calculation. When a salary is provided during the Fellowship, the ERS considers that the Fellow already has a source of funding while completing the Fellowship. Most Fellows do not receive any salary during their leave from the Home Unit and it is their responsibility to manage expenses in their Home country (rent, etc.). **The grant amount is set in order to enable the stay in the Host country only.**
- b. **If the applicant is already at the receiving Institute or in the Host country, the travel flat rate is not granted.**
- c. The ERS does not provide the Fellows with **bench fees, any other contribution to the costs of the research or any other financial support to the social security and safety schemes** during the Fellowship.
- d. **In order to avoid duplication of expenditure,** particularly with national sources, it is a condition of any award by the ERS that a full declaration be made to the organization of all other grants, awards and contributions applied for towards the same travel and subsistence expenditures. **Continuation in whole or in part of existing salary and income** must also be declared. It will be separately considered by the ERS in the light of any explanations furnished by the fellow of the necessity of continuing expenses not connected with the ERS fellowship. **The ERS will usually reduce its normal financial intervention by a corresponding sum or, where appropriate, annul it entirely.**
- e. **The Fellowships may not be financially supplemented by agencies other than the Home or Host Institutes, or the Fellows personally. Therefore they may not run concurrently with other awards, funds, grants, fellowships, etc. during the same time period and in relation with the same project.**
- f. **The financial supplements that are permitted to Fellows, to be supplied with by Home and/or Host Institutes without deduction on the ERS grant amount; are financial aid to cover the Fellows' obligatory health and safety insurances, legal and social security insurances, pension schemes and child support in Home and Host country.**

4.3. Fellow's responsibility (insurance, taxes, etc.)

- a. **The ERS does not recognize recipients of its Fellowships as agents or employees of the ERS and accepts no liability in respect of any of their actions or activities or in respect to the health or safety of their persons.** It is the Fellow's and Host Supervisor's responsibility to find a mutual agreement on the nature, in terms of status, of the Fellow's appointment during the Fellowship at the Host unit.
- b. ERS Fellows are not insured by the ERS against medical expenses for themselves or their families; neither are they insured for accidents during their travel to and from the Host Institution. In their own interest, recipients of Fellowships are, therefore, urged to make sure that they, their families and the institutions which receive them, are fully covered by the necessary insurances. **It is the sole responsibility of the recipient of an award to ensure that he/she is covered under a social security scheme providing protection at least equivalent to those of local researchers holding a similar position.**
- c. The ERS is a non-governmental international organization whose awards are not automatically endowed with any particular tax privileges. **It is the sole responsibility of the recipient of an award to pay any tax which may be levied upon him/her by the appropriate national authority.** The ERS is not responsible for any tax issue that may arise either in the Home or in the Host country and any taxes have to come out of the Fellowship award.

4.4. Subsistence rates

Table - Subsistence rates 2013

	Australia	Austria	Belgium	Canada	Denmark	Finland	France	Germany	Greece	Ireland
fellow	2593	2765	2436	2593	2750	2320	2436	2677	2374	2652
for each dependent	280	290	260	280	285	248	263	280	253	275
currency	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO

	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Spain	Switzerland	UK	USA	Other
fellow	2706	2523	2500	2680	2410	3500	2500	2401	2200
for each dependent	280	270	260	280	260	390	280	263	220
currency	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO

The subsistence rates mentioned are indicative and subject to change. The subsistence rates depend on the available yearly ERS Fellowship budget and are also subject to variable inflation, exchange rates and the cost of living in the Host country.

5. Requirements after the fellowship for Host Institutes & ERS Fellows

5.1. ERS follow-up reports

- Once the Fellow has completed the Fellowship, both the Fellow and the Host Supervisor are expected to submit **within 3 months of the end of the Fellowship**, an administrative and scientific end-of-project report and a completed ERS Fellowship questionnaire.
- Both the Fellow and the Host Supervisor will be requested, to separately **provide two years and five years after the end of the Fellowship**, a completed questionnaire and a report on any outcomes related to the Fellowship (career opportunities, papers published, grants & awards received, patents, etc.)

5.2. Publications

- Both the Fellow and Host Supervisor will ensure that any publication or outcome related to the Fellowship will **acknowledge the ERS support**.
- Both the Fellow and Host Supervisor will record and update the ERS on any publication activity and other outcome resulting from the Fellowship, within two months of the said publication being made public.
- Publication of results in the official journals of the society, in particular in the ERJ, is encouraged.

5.3. Association of ERS Fellows

- Successful candidates will be recognised through the Association of ERS Fellows. Upon submission of a satisfactory end-of-project report, which must carry the endorsement of the Host Supervisor, Fellows are eligible to join the Association of ERS Fellows. This Association brings together the exclusive group of ERS Fellows who, after an international evaluation process, were selected from a large number of candidates to receive ERS Fellowships.
- The Association of ERS Fellows directory provides a unique and invaluable resource of addresses, current professional activities, Fellowship subjects and Host Institutes. It permits members to identify and contact colleagues. It may also serve as a useful recruitment pool.
- A short resumé on the Fellowship experience will be requested from the Fellow **within 3 months of the end of the project** and will be posted on the ERS Website (www.ersnet.org/Association-Fellows). Fellows will automatically become members of the Association of ERS Fellows.
- ERS Fellows are encouraged to attend the Fellows' Lunchtime Session organised at the ERS Annual Congress.