

# May 2021 RESPIRE4 Application Guidance V1 (25.01.2021)

**2<sup>nd</sup> call**

**Deadline: 1 May 2021 (23:59 CEST)**

**RESPIRE4 - REspiratory Science Promoted by International Research Exchanges 4**



This project has received funding from the European Union's (EU) Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 847462

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>                                       | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2. RESPIRE4 FELLOWSHIPS ON OFFER.....</b>                      | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>3. ELIGIBILITY .....</b>                                       | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>4. PRE-REGISTERED HOST CENTRES &amp; HOST SUPERVISOR .....</b> | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>5. ETHICS, COMPLIANCE AND INTEGRITY.....</b>                   | <b>12</b> |
| <b>6. CAREER DEVELOPMENT, SECONDMENTS AND OUTREACH.....</b>       | <b>14</b> |
| <b>7. APPLICATION PROCESS.....</b>                                | <b>16</b> |
| <b>8. EVALUATION &amp; SELECTION PROCESS.....</b>                 | <b>18</b> |
| <b>9. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND LESS REPRESENTED COUNTRIES.....</b> | <b>21</b> |
| <b>10. ALLOWANCES .....</b>                                       | <b>21</b> |
| <b>11. REPORTING, PUBLICATIONS &amp; IPR REQUIREMENTS.....</b>    | <b>24</b> |
| <b>12. ENQUIRIES .....</b>  | <b>26</b> |

## Main RESPIRE4 definitions

**EU Member States (MS):** the current EU (European Union) Member States and their overseas departments (including Overseas Countries & Territories - OCT). Please also see section 2.1 below.

**Horizon2020 (H2020) Associate Country (AC):** a country which is party to an international agreement with the European Union, as identified in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013. The current list as of 1 September 2017 can be found on the [EU website](#) (please double check before applying whether the list has been updated recently). Please also see section 2.1.

**Europe:** within the specific context of this programme, Europe means the EU Member States (MS) as well as the H2020 Associate Countries (AC). Currently, within RESPIRE4 (H2020), the United Kingdom (UK) has the same status as a MS or AC.

**H2020 Non-associated Third Country (TC):** countries that are neither EU Member States (MS) nor associated to Horizon 2020 (AC). Please also see section 2.1.

**RESPIRE4 European Fellowships (EF):** fellowships lasting exactly 24 months, open to researchers of any nationality, either coming to Europe from any country in the world or moving within Europe. Please see also above-mentioned definition of Europe as well as section 2.

**RESPIRE4 Global Fellowships (GF):** fellowships lasting exactly 36 months, entailing an initial outgoing phase in a TC outside of Europe followed by a return phase to Europe. They are open only to nationals or long-term residents of MS or AC. Please see also above-mentioned definition of Europe as well as section 2.

**Host centre:** the legal entity employing, supervising and training the fellowship recipient during the RESPIRE4 fellowship. It is ultimately responsible for the fellowship recipient and the fellowship. For Global Fellowships, the main host centre is in principle that of the return phase to Europe. Please see also section 2.3.

# 1. Introduction

- a. The RESPIRE4 Postdoctoral Research Fellowship programme is an international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary programme providing Marie Skłodowska-Curie opportunities to early stage scientists, researchers and clinicians with the potential to become the leaders of tomorrow in respiratory science and research.
- b. The programme is co-funded by the [European Respiratory Society](#) (ERS) as well as the European Union (EU) under the Horizon 2020 (H2020) / [Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions](#) (MSCA) COFUND.
- c. RESPIRE4 builds on the external evaluation and feedback of RESPIRE1 (2009-2013), RESPIRE2 (2013-2018) and ongoing RESPIRE3 (2016-2022) programme coordinated by ERS with co-funding from the EU's 7th Framework Programme (FP7) and H2020.
- d. More in particular, the RESPIRE4 programme aims to strengthen the European Research Area (ERA) as well as the respiratory specialty by:
  - Promoting excellent science in respiratory research in Europe and worldwide through transnational mobility and transfer of knowledge;
  - Enabling Europe to become a hub for the exchange of scientists, actively involved in respiratory medicine in both academia and the non-academic sector;
  - Fostering the implementation of novel and innovative techniques and therapies as well as the development of new international collaborations;
  - Gathering expertise from various fields, even those not traditionally associated with respiratory research, as well as fostering career development.
- e. Applicants from any discipline (e.g. life sciences, engineering, mathematics, information technology, biochemistry, pharmacology) are highly encouraged to apply to carry out research in an area related to respiratory science/medicine, in line with the reference document, the [ERS 10 Principles for Lung Health](#). Applicants, host centres and applications with a broad range of methodological expertise are welcome across the spectrum of research from basic science, translational and clinical research to health systems and implementation research.
- f. If selected, fellowship recipients will be working exclusively on the RESPIRE4 research project and research training activities identified in the online application, based at pre-registered RESPIRE4 host centres and benefiting from appropriate working conditions (e.g. employment contract, living & mobility allowances, family allowance if applicable). Career development as well as training in scientific and non-scientific, transferable skills are important elements of RESPIRE4.
- g. Applicants can choose between one of two options: RESPIRE4 36-month Global Fellowships OR RESPIRE4 24-month European Fellowships. Fellowships are awarded based on scientific merit.
- h. This Application Guidance refers to the 2<sup>nd</sup> call of RESPIRE4 with deadline of: **1 May 2021 (23:59 CEST)**. It sets out the requirements of the programme for applicants as well as host centres, in line with H2020 rules as well as the RESPIRE4 Grant Agreement between ERS and the EU. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document is also available on the [ERS website](#), based on this Application Guidance.
- i. RESPIRE4 is a highly competitive programme as it selects Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellows. It is part of a wider [ERS fellowship portfolio](#) and – before applying - applicants are highly encouraged to ensure that they identify the most relevant ERS programme(s) in light of their background, objectives and career goals. For instance, RESPIRE4 is a research programme while projects aimed at purely clinical or educational training purposes align with other ERS fellowships.

## 2. RESPIRE4 Fellowships on offer

### 2.1 2-year European Fellowships OR 3-year Global Fellowships

- a. Two types of RESPIRE4 fellowships are on offer, allowing for more flexibility for applicants. Applicants can only submit ONE application for each RESPIRE4 round and ONLY one of the two programmes can be selected, either 24-month European Fellowships OR 36-month Global Fellowships. Please select the fellowship programme you would like to undertake and report ONLY ONE choice in the online fellowship application platform; otherwise your application may be deemed ineligible.
- b. Requirements for each RESPIRE4 fellowship type are summarised in the table below; in addition, please also refer to sections 2.2 or 2.3 as well as section 3 on eligibility hereunder.

| Type  | Brief description  | Nationality (applicant)  | Mobility rule (applicant)   | Host Centres  |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <b>24-month RESPIRE4 European Fellowship (EF)</b> | Open to researchers either coming to Europe* from any country in the world or moving within Europe   | Open to all nationalities  | Transnational mobility rule applies to country where fellowship will be held<br><br>See also mobility rule in section 3.3.  | Mandatory: ONE pre-registered host centre based in Europe<br><br>Optional: if there is a secondment (e.g. non-academic sector), it must be based in Europe – see section 6  |
| <b>36-month RESPIRE4 Global Fellowships (GF)</b>  | Fellowship starts with outgoing phase in Third Country (TC*)<br>+ followed by mandatory return phase to Europe*<br><br>Duration of TC initial outgoing phase is flexible, provided that return phase to Europe may not be more than 50% of the total duration of the fellowship<br><br>For the return phase, it is possible to return to any previous home centre or any other centre, provided it is in Europe* | Nationals or long-term residents of MS* or AC*<br><br>Long-term residence means a period of legal and continuous residence within a MS or AC of at least 5 consecutive years.<br><br>Periods of absence from the territory of the MS or AC shall be taken into account for the calculation of this period where they are shorter than 6 consecutive months and do not exceed in total ten months within this period. | Transnational mobility rule applies to country where the fellowship starts and where the initial outgoing phase takes place (NOT the country of the return phase to Europe)<br><br>See also mobility rule in section 3.3. | Mandatory: TWO pre-registered host centres as follows:<br><br>1) Initial outgoing phase: ONE pre-registered host centre based in TC<br>+<br>2) Return phase: ONE pre-registered host centre based in Europe<br><br>Optional: if there is a secondment (e.g. non-academic sector), it can be based in MS, AC or TC – see section 6 |

**\*IMPORTANT:** Please see main RESPIRE4 definitions on page 2

## 2.2 RESPIRE4 European Fellowships

- a. Please see summary in above mentioned table (section 2.1).
- b. Applicants for European Fellowships should develop and submit a research project covering **exactly 24 months**; failure to do so will mean that the application will not be considered eligible.

## 2.3 RESPIRE4 Global Fellowships

- a. Please see the summary in the above-mentioned table (section 2.1).
- b. Global Fellowships were offered for the first time through the previous RESPIRE3 programme, in order to offer wider choices and options to potential applicants, depending on their research projects and career goals, to foster international long-term collaborations and knowledge transfer as well as to engage with host centres worldwide. This aims to ultimately promote excellence in respiratory science/medicine while strengthening research in the European Research Area (ERA) and beyond.
- c. In order to allow adequate time for the initial outgoing period outside of Europe and the return phase, Global Fellowships will be awarded for a 36-month period. Applicants for Global Fellowships should thus mandatorily develop and submit a research project covering **exactly 36 months**; failure to do so will mean that the application will not be considered eligible.
- d. Applicants interested in a Global Fellowship, should contact both the host for the outgoing initial phase as well as for the return phase to Europe. As part of the application process, both hosts will need to provide Host Commitment Declaration Forms (see also section 7.4).
- e. The application should already contain a full proposal, with project design for both phases. The project carried out during the return phase should be the continuation of the project started during

the initial outgoing phase and therefore integral part of the very same proposal. Applicants should clearly identify which steps take place in which country and how they relate to each other.

- f. Applicants wishing to opt for Global Fellowships should clearly provide in the online application form, a clear rationale explaining why and how the objectives of the research project are only attainable by going outside of Europe (e.g. availability of skills, know-how, expertise, facilities, material, training, etc.) during the initial outgoing phase and what are the expected benefits for the mandatory return phase to Europe for the fellowship recipient, the host centre(s) and the wider respiratory specialty.
- g. The **return phase back to Europe is mandatory**, in order to ensure knowledge transfer and re-integration into the ERA. It should be integral part of the employment contract as well as partnership agreement between the two host centres.
- h. For the return phase, researchers will have the possibility to return to any previous “home” centre (any centre hosting the researchers during their previous career) or any other centre, as long as it is based in Europe.
- i. For Global Fellowships, in principle, the host centre in Europe will provide the employment contract covering the full duration of the RESPIRE4 fellowship. The fellowship recipient will then be seconded to the host centre in a TC during the initial outgoing phase, in line with general current practices within other EU MSCA programmes.
- j. Alternatively, as now the case for MSCA Individual Fellowships (IFs - managed directly by EU), a further option is now potentially feasible apart from the secondment option, if needed. The host centre in a TC may thus exceptionally conclude an additional employment contract with the fellowship recipient to ensure equivalent social security coverage and conditions similar to local researchers with a similar position, during the TC stay.

Under this option, the fellowship recipient will have two employment contracts: one with the main host centre in Europe for the total duration of the fellowship (e.g. 3-year period) AND one complementary, additional one with the TC host centre (e.g. for a 2-year period, depending on what set out in the online application form). Host centre(s) should ensure this option is possible in the two countries concerned from an administrative & legal point of view and should contact ERS in advance to further discuss the feasibility of this option, as this would also require further agreement by the EU.

- k. The host centre and host supervisor of the return phase in Europe will be the main contact/reference host centre for the purpose of RESPIRE4 and will have the overall responsibility to ensure compliance and the smooth running of the whole fellowship. It will make facilities/resources available for the return phase and it will work closely with the host centre outside of Europe, notably during the initial outgoing phase.
- l. The allowances (see section 10) destined to the fellowship recipient as well as the management contribution (see section 4) will be in principle transferred via the host centre in Europe with the overall responsibility for the fellowship, but both hosts (outgoing phase & return phase) will need to discuss and agree on financial aspects, in cooperation with the fellowship recipient, notably via a partnership agreement.
- m. In light of the potential complexity of Global Fellowships, it is highly recommended that the two host centres involved already agree amongst themselves and with the applicant, on the actual details of the cooperation, already during the fellowship application phase and ensure feasibility of proposed arrangements in the two concerned countries and two host centres.
- n. If the applicant is selected, – and before the fellowship starts - the two host centres will, in principle, develop a collaboration/partnership agreement, specific to the needs of the fellowship. While they will be able to develop their own model, in cooperation with the fellowship recipient, the agreement should align with the framework provided by the May 2021 RESPIRE4 Application Guidance and cover topics such as: dates/timelines, financial aspects, roles & responsibilities, nature of research project as well as its funding, facilities/infrastructure, training and career development, decision-making, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) & confidentiality, reporting & open access, ethics, settlement of disputes, logistical support towards moving to a new country (e.g. visa), etc.
- o. Adequate time should be allowed for administrative and logistical requirements (e.g. visa application, finalisation of collaboration/partnership agreement) linked with moving to a country outside of Europe. Specific support will need to be provided by both host centres with this matter, as soon as the selection is confirmed. However, all fellowships should start at the very latest by end of February 2022. It is up to applicants and host centres to ensure that they start these procedures as early as possible to comply with this timeframe.

- p. Please also carefully note ethics requirements in section 5 hereunder, as they also apply to Global Fellowships and to research carried out outside of Europe.
- q. The ERS Office remains available to discuss proposed arrangements further – if needed – as Global Fellowships could require putting in place complex arrangements.

## 3. Eligibility

The main eligibility requirements for fellowship applicants are set out in this section, in line with H2020 MSCA rules. In case of doubt, please contact the ERS Office ([fellowships@ersnet.org](mailto:fellowships@ersnet.org)), well in advance of the call deadline, as some queries may require some time to address, depending on the specific circumstances.

### 3.1 Qualifications & publications

- a. Applicants can only submit **one application for each call** and must choose only one type of fellowship: 24-month RESPIRE4 European Fellowship OR 36-month RESPIRE4 Global Fellowship. It is up to applicants to carefully consider whether they meet all the eligibility criteria for the specific fellowship type chosen and whether they can provide related proof/evidence, if and as needed. It is up to applicants to check the status of a specific country within the H2020 programme, before applying.
- b. Applicants from **any discipline** (e.g. life sciences, engineering, mathematics, information technology, biochemistry, pharmacology) are encouraged to apply, with a research project (one research title only) related to respiratory science/medicine, in line with the reference document, the [ERS 10 Principles for Lung Health](#).
- c. Applicants should possess appropriate scientific, medical qualifications (academic) and/or experience (professional), and/or be engaged in research/science/practice that is relevant to the specific fellowship project/topic applied for.
- d. Applicants need to comply with the EU definition of “**experienced researcher**”: at the time of the reference date for the recruitment of researchers (e.g. 1 May 2021 for 2<sup>nd</sup> call), applicants must be in possession of a doctoral degree (PhD) or have at least four years of full-time equivalent\* research experience. *\*Full-time equivalent research experience is measured from the date when a researcher obtained the degree, which would formally entitle him or her to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the researcher is recruited or seconded, irrespective of whether or not a doctorate is or was ever envisaged.* Periods of inactivity in research (e.g. unemployment, periods of employment outside research, parental or long-term sick leave) do not count towards the time of research experience, according to the EU definition.
- e. In the context of Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, Medical Doctor (MD) studies are not considered as equivalent to PhD studies. For applicants with an MD, the requirement of 4 years of full-time research experience therefore applies (unless they have also been awarded a PhD).
- f. Applicants must have at least **one first author (or co-author) paper published** (or accepted for publication) in an international peer-reviewed journal by the time of the reference date of 1 May 2021 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> call. Papers that are in preparation, submitted, or in revision are not eligible until they have been formally accepted for publication.

If you have submitted a 1st author paper and it has been formally accepted for future publication, you are eligible but proof/evidence of the acceptance will be requested by ERS. Posters and conference abstracts are not considered as publications in an international peer-review journal.

- g. In terms of **nationality**, the requirements differ depending on the type of fellowship chosen by the applicant, as follows:
- 2-year European Fellowships: open to applicants of any nationality to come to Europe. Please also refer to table under 2.1.
  - 3-year Global Fellowships: **ONLY** open to nationals or long-term residents of EU MS or AC. Long-term residence means a period of legal and continuous residence within a MS or AC of at least 5 consecutive years. Periods of absence from the territory of the MS or AC shall be taken into account for the calculation of this period where they are shorter than 6 consecutive months and do not exceed in total ten months within this period. Please see also table 2.1 above.

- h. Applicants should have adequate fluency in the language spoken at the host centre(s), to enable him/her to successfully carry out the research project.
- i. RESPIRE4 is open to ERS members and non-members, in line with H2020 wider principles. Selected fellowship recipients will be strongly encouraged to become ERS members to maximise career development opportunities. Further information is available on the [ERS website](#).

### **3.2 Other ERS fellowship(s) & double funding**

- a. Applicants who have been previous RESPIRE fellowship recipients (including all RESPIRE1, RESPIRE2 and RESPIRE3) are not eligible, as RESPIRE4 aims to create new opportunities reaching out to researchers who did not benefit yet from a previous RESPIRE Fellowship.
- b. Applicants having received other ERS fellowships (other than RESPIRE – see previous point) are eligible, provided that they meet all eligibility criteria and that they have provided the ERS with the requested follow-up reports at the end of their previous fellowship.
- c. No double funding is possible nor any concurrent combination of a RESPIRE4 Fellowship with any other MSCA funding (e.g. IF, ITN, etc), H2020 funding or other grants with other funding bodies, within the same timeframe. Therefore, a fellowship recipient cannot benefit, at the same time, from any concurrently running stipend/salary or fellowship granted from other funding sources, as this would constitute double funding with regard to the RESPIRE4 living, mobility and – if applicable – family allowance.

Under specific circumstances, it may be possible to combine other grants (with the exception of H2020 funding) with the RESPIRE4 fellowship, where there's a clear case for complementarity (e.g. other funds used solely towards research costs); this should be discussed and agreed with ERS. Funding is not granted in retrospect for already fully or partly carried out projects. Please also refer to section 10.

- d. On the other hand, synergies with the European Structural & Investment Funds and other regional funds (e.g. ERDF) are encouraged, if feasible. Host centres should contact the ERS Office if they would like to discuss this further.

### **3.3 Transnational mobility**

- a. The applicant must move (or have moved) from the home country to the host country. More specifically, applicants must comply with the mandatory **Marie Skłodowska-Curie mobility rule**: by the time of the reference date of 1 May 2021, applicants must demonstrate transnational mobility and must not have resided nor carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc) in the country of the host centre for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the reference date (i.e. reference period: 1 May 2018 – 1 May 2021). Time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention, compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays are not taken into account.
- b. The mobility rule applies differently depending on the option (European or Global fellowships) chosen by the applicant. For European Fellowships, the rule applies to the country where the fellowship is held. For Global Fellowships, it applies to the outgoing phase country where the fellowship starts (NOT the country of the return phase to Europe). See also the table under section 2.1.
- c. In terms of the mobility rule, supporting documents may be requested to confirm compliance if needed (e.g. copies of work permits, residence documents, other).
- d. Applicants already permanently employed at the host centre prior to applying are not eligible.
- e. Applicants already at their host country/centre may be eligible provided: that they comply with the abovementioned Marie Skłodowska-Curie mobility rule and that they are not permanently employed by the host. Should they be eligible, they will nevertheless need to put forward a strong case and valid rationale (e.g. best centre for their project, added value for career development, etc) for their choice, the aim of the fellowships being to promote transnational mobility, launch new projects, and establish new collaborations.

### **3.4 Research project & timeline**

- a. Selected fellowship recipients will need to be employed to work on the RESPIRE4 fellowship research project in respiratory science/medicine on a full-time basis during the entire fellowship. Successful applicants are not allowed to carry out any paid or salaried activities other than those related to the RESPIRE project, during the fellowship period.

- b. In principle, the fellowship is carried out on a full-time basis (100%). Part-time arrangements may be potentially envisaged (e.g. personal/family reasons, supplementary activities such as creating a company) but this will need to be agreed with the host supervisor/centre as well as fully justified and discussed on a case-by-case basis. This will be subject to agreement from both ERS and the EU after the fellowship recipient is selected or during the course of the fellowship. If approved, all the allowances will be calculated on a pro-rata basis (based on a 30-day month).
- c. The fellowship research project cannot be split nor reduced. It is critical that the research project plan is realistic, feasible and achievable within the planned timeframe. The project cannot start before the final selection decision and funding is not granted in retrospect for already fully or partly carried out projects.
- d. Selected fellowship recipient will be recruited by the host centre to work exclusively on the RESPIRE4 fellowship research project and research training activities, identified in the online application. Small and complementary, additional professional training and personal development activities could, to some extent, be undertaken such as: complementary skills training (e.g. teaching activity as part of research training, proposal writing, language lessons), attendance at conferences/workshops and outreach activities to the public.
- e. Between the notification date and the start of the fellowship, successful applicants should complete travel, visa, housing, employment contract, insurance formalities, if and as needed. To achieve this, they should engage with their host centre(s) and related authorities well ahead of time. While this will notably be the case for Global Fellowships, it also relates to European Fellowships as well as cases where the applicant is already at the host centre (but meeting the mobility rule). These points should be carefully considered and discussed with the host centre/supervisor when identifying the starting date and timeline for the research project.
- f. The research project must start at the **earliest on 1 October 2021 and at the latest by the end of February 2022**. Therefore, the fellowship cannot start after the end of February 2022, in line with the timeline set out with the EU for the RESPIRE4 programme. Please bear in mind that final notifications will be sent during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of August 2021 and that it is up to applicants to ensure – with the host centre(s) - that your proposed starting date is feasible.

### **3.5 Pre-registered RESPIRE4 host centres**

- a. Before applying, applicants should identify the pre-registered host centre and host supervisor most suitable for their research project and career development, as follows:
  - For 2-year European Fellowships: only one host centre and one host supervisor are needed. The host centre must be based in Europe. See also table under 2.1
  - For 3-year Global Fellowships, two pre-registered host centres and two host supervisors are needed: one for the initial outgoing phase (TC) and one for the mandatory return phase to Europe. The return phase may not be more than 50% of the total duration of the fellowship. See also table under 2.1
- b. It is mandatory for host centres wishing to participate in RESPIRE4 to apply to be pre-registered and confirm compliance with RESPIRE4's commitments, ensuring that selected fellowship recipients enjoy suitable working conditions and a high-quality research environment. This applies to both centres (outgoing phase & return phase) for Global Fellowships. Please also refer to section 4 hereunder.
- c. A pre-registered list of hosts in the form of a new [Web Host Registry platform](#) was launched specifically for RESPIRE4 to help facilitate the applicants' search for suitable centres. Kindly note that the contact person(s) indicated in the Web Host Registry under each host centre are the first port-of-call for applicants potentially interested in collaborating with the host centre. The most suitable supervisor will then need to be identified within each host centre in line with the research project proposed by the potential applicant.
- d. Host centres already listed for the previous RESPIRE3 programme are not automatically pre-registered. Due to the new administrative requirements, in line with H2020, these host centres still need to apply to confirm compliance specifically for the new RESPIRE4. They will, however, benefit, from a fast-track procedure as they already underwent a scientific review in the past.
- e. It remains up to fellowship applicants to search, identify and get in touch with the most suitable host centre(s), to discuss a potential cooperation. The objective is to enable researchers to develop their own research project via a bottom-up individually-driven approach, according to their research interest.



- f. ERS cannot be responsible for any content provided by host centres on the Web Host Registry nor for any choice made by applicants in terms of the most suitable host centre. It is also crucial that the host supervisor is identified on the basis of his/her competences, knowledge and expertise linked to the area of the project proposal, but also taking into account his/her availability.
- g. Potential fellowship applicants are also able to freely **propose new centre(s) not listed** as long as the latter confirms compliance with the RESPIRE4 host centre's commitments and undergoes the relevant review process by submitting the [Host Application Online Form](#). This should ideally take place well in advance of the application deadline of 1 May 2021. Host applications should thus be submitted, if not already done, at the **very latest by mid-April 2021** as the whole process may take a few weeks; however, please do not hesitate to contact the office ([fellowships@ersnet.org](mailto:fellowships@ersnet.org)) to further discuss this timeline.

h. **IMPORTANT:** Potential fellowship applicants need to discuss in detail and agree all aspects of the fellowship with the chosen host centre(s) and host supervisor(s) within the wider framework of the May 2021 RESPIRE4 Application Guidance, already at the application phase. This notably includes (non-exclusive list): research project & costs, career development & training, facilities/resources available, nature of the employment contract, deductions/social coverage, etc. Applicants need to discuss financial details with the host centre(s), notably minimum gross salary and research costs, in order to fill out the Budget & Costings section within the Host Commitment Declaration Form, to be submitted with the online application.

Please also refer to section 4 hereunder as well as – for Global Fellowships - section 2.3 for further guidance on the cooperation/partnership agreement between the two host centres.

## 4. Pre-registered Host centres & Host supervisor

- a. All host centres need to be pre-registered and to be listed on the [RESPIRE4 Web Host Registry](#) in order to participate in RESPIRE4, whether in European and/or Global Fellowships. Further information can be found in section 3.5 and on the ERS website through the [Host Application Online Form](#).
- b. Among other, host centres need to comply with a number of administrative requirements as set out in section A of the [Host Online Application Form](#), in alignment with the principles set out by H2020. Section 4 of these Application Guidance as well as the Host Commitment Declaration Form are based on section A of the Host Online Application Form.
- c. The [European Charter for Researchers, the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, and the EU Human Resources Development](#) principles, provide a best practice framework for employing and supporting researchers and are reference documents for RESPIRE4. Host centres have confirmed alignment in order to be pre-registered. Host centres are strongly encouraged to apply for the '[HR Excellence in Research](#)' award by the EU, although this is not a mandatory requirement for the RESPIRE4 programme itself.
- d. The host centre, particularly the host supervisor, will ultimately be responsible for the fellowship recipient and his/her fellowship research project, ensuring compliance with EU and national laws/standards (e.g. health & safety, taxes, open access to publications etc) throughout the full fellowship period, even during secondments (e.g. non-academic sector). The host centre, particularly the host supervisor, will also ensure compliance with ethical and integrity principles, as set out in section 5.
- e. For Global Fellowships, the host centre of the return phase in Europe will have the overall responsibility to provide the employment contract and to ensure compliance and the smooth running of the whole fellowship, although it will work closely with the host centre for the outgoing phase. For instance, it will need to ensure that the fellowship recipient is covered from social security / insurance perspective even when in another organisation/country. For Global Fellowships, please also refer to point 2.3.

- f. In line with the European Charter and Code for Researchers, the host centre commits to host selected RESPIRE4 fellowship recipient and – **well in advance of the start of the fellowship** - offer a **mandatory fixed-term employment** fellow/host contract (full-time basis) covering:
  - full social security in line with EU standards (including but not exclusively: annual leave, pension rights, parental leave, sickness leave, health/accident insurance, unemployment & invalidity benefits, benefits for accidents at work and occupational diseases etc);

- Starting/end date during which RESPIRE4 fellow will be fully and exclusively dedicated to the fellowship and related research project on full-time basis;
- Remuneration (in line with section 10 below);
- IPR and confidentiality during/after fellowship (including but not exclusively: access to background, use of results, promoting the action);
- Other (e.g. health & safety, ethics, any secondment periods, facilities/infrastructure and funding for research project, open access to publications, etc)

The employment contract must cover the fellowship recipient for the full duration of the fellowship, including any secondment periods and – for Global Fellowships - periods outside of Europe. Fellowship recipients should enjoy the same standards of safety and occupational health as those of local researchers with a similar position, no matter where the research takes place. The applicant and host centre should already discuss the employment contract and financial aspects at the application phase (see section 3.5).

In line with H2020, under RESPIRE4, fixed amount fellowship agreements (e.g. visiting scientist/guest arrangements, affiliation/association agreements, no-pay contracts etc) are not eligible and will mean that the fellowship cannot be granted. Only full employment contracts (see above) are eligible. This point should be checked carefully by the applicant and the host supervisor well before applying, notably with the responsible host centre's Human Resources, Finance and any other concerned departments.

Copies of related documents (e.g. employment contract, etc) will need to be provided to ERS before the start of the fellowship. The fellowship nor the funding cannot officially start if an employment contract has not been finalised and signed by both parties in relation to the RESPIRE4 fellowship. If that is the case, the start of the fellowship will be delayed accordingly.

- g. The contract is signed exclusively between the fellowship recipient and the host centre(s) in line with national law. There is no contractual relationship between the fellowship recipient and ERS nor the EU. It is important that the host centre (e.g. host supervisor, HR) and fellowship recipient discuss clearly rights and obligations under the employment contract before signing.
- h. In order to set out payment arrangements as well as responsibilities, the ERS and host centre(s) will sign a Payment Agreement. A template model will be provided by ERS for this purpose. For Global Fellowships, in principle, this agreement is signed by the "main" host centre based in Europe, with the overall responsibilities of the fellowship.
- i. The fellow's living, mobility and – if applicable – family allowances will be transferred via the host centre in Europe (both for European and Global fellowships) which will in turn accordingly provide the fellow with remuneration. The host centre may pay a top-up from another budget source (except for H2020 and Horizon Europe funds) in order to complement these allowances, if it wishes and as needed.
- j. The host centre responsible will receive, through ERS/EU co-funding, a contribution towards management costs of max. €325.- per each fellow-month actually completed by the selected RESPIRE4 fellowship recipient. This amount corresponds to the actual, total contribution (max. €3'900.- per fellow-year) that ERS receives from the EU towards management costs for each fellow. This allowance should be used by the host centre as a contribution towards the management of the RESPIRE4 fellowship itself.
- k. For Global Fellowships, the funds will be in principle transferred via the host centre in Europe with the overall responsibility for the fellowship, but both hosts (outgoing phase & return phase) will need to discuss and agree on financial aspects. Please also refer to point 2.3.
- l. No further additional funding (e.g. overheads, bench fees, research project costs, consumables) will be available from the ERS nor the EU, apart from the allowances for the benefit of fellowship recipients (see 10.1.a) and the management cost contribution destined to host centres (see 4.j). It is up to host centres to internally ensure – prior to the fellowship application – that adequate resources/funds to cover these types of costs in relation to a specific applicant are in place.
- m. The host centre, particularly the host supervisor, commits to provide the RESPIRE4 fellowship recipient with high-level support and adequate working conditions, notably in terms of scientific supervision as well as administrative assistance during all phases of the fellowship: (e.g. housing, visa, safety induction, availability of office/lab space, opening of bank account, tax formalities, administrative support for family moving etc), during (e.g. high-quality supervision, performance

evaluation/review, career development, training, reporting, IPR, ethics) and at end of fellowship (e.g. career advice, final reporting etc).

- n. In collaboration with the fellowship recipient, the host supervisor should allocate a scientific mentor, expert in a different discipline and affiliated with another centre, preferably from the non-academic sector, if possible. This is in line with the focus of the programme on an interdisciplinary, intersectoral approach.
- o. An administrative mentor should also be assigned to support the fellowship recipient before and during the fellowship, particularly in terms of moving to a new country and finalising administrative processes before the fellowship (e.g. visa, employment contract). For Global Fellowships, it is recommended to have two administrative mentors, to provide support in the two countries. The main host supervisor will ensure that this mentor is allocated and is providing adequate support.
- p. The host centre commits to provide all the necessary means to enable RESPIRE4 fellowship recipients to carry out the research activities and complete their research project, including adequate training, facilities, infrastructure, equipment and products. The host centre will cover costs associated with the delivery of the fellowship research project through other funds (with the exception of any other H2020 funding) and ensure, along with the fellowship recipient, open access (Green or Gold options – see section 11) to all peer-reviewed scientific publications directly relating to the project's results, in line with H2020 principles (see also section 11.2).
- q. The host centre will provide the fellowship recipient with career development support, training in scientific and non-scientific transferable skills as well as opportunities to train and supervise students and/or technicians, to carry out talks and co-author grants and papers. It will allow fellowship recipients to attend ERS training events and support (e.g. ERS International Congress, ERS mentoring, ERS Lung Science Conference, etc) as well as to undertake a potential secondment in the non-academic sector (see section 6).
- r. A tailored Career Development Plan will also be developed by the fellowship recipient together with the host supervisor, in order to also plan for the post-fellowship phase. An initial summary is already submitted in the online application platform and ERS will also ask for updates during the fellowship itself as part of interim reporting. For Global Fellowships, this plan will be led by the fellowship recipients with the main host supervisor (that of the return phase), in liaison with the other host supervisor (initial outgoing phase).
- s. Host centres, notably host supervisors, also commit to ensure that the research project and research training activities – within the framework of the fellowship – comply with fundamental ethical principles, as set out in section 5 hereunder.
- t. There are no restrictions in terms of the number of fellowship applications in which a host centre is involved within the same call, it is up to each host centre to decide with which applicants they wish to collaborate. On the other hand, it will not be possible for all pre-registered host centres to be awarded a RESPIRE4 fellowship due to the limited number of places available.
- u. As highlighted throughout this section 4, the **host supervisor** is main responsible person for the fellowship and fellowship recipient within the host centre and should guarantee a smooth integration process. The host supervisor is the main person responsible for the scientific training of the fellowship recipient and ensures that s/he takes full advantage of the training opportunity offered by the host institution; s/he help the fellowship recipient increase his/her technical skills (e.g. lab work) as well as non-scientific skills (e.g. grant writing). His/her engagement must go beyond scientific supervision and include, for example, overview of administrative procedures. The host supervisor supports the fellowship recipient in designing secondment in the academic or non-academic sector if needed, depending on the nature of the research project. He or she takes into consideration that fellowship recipients must be able to attend meetings, conferences and trainings, and decide on how to seize the opportunities offered by the programme. The host supervisor takes also into consideration that fellowship recipients need to publish in open access journals and encourages them to share their data as well as to participate in local outreach events. Host supervisors accept their role at the submission step, via the Host Commitment Declaration Form, which forms part of the online application.

## 5. Ethics, compliance & integrity

### 5.1 Ethical considerations

- a. Ethical considerations, compliance and research integrity are essential, mandatory aspects of RESPIRE4 Fellowships, in line with ERS and EU's Guidance. All the activities carried out under Horizon 2020 co-funding must comply with [H2020 ethical principles](#) and relevant international, EU, national, and local legislation, for example the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights as well as the highest standards of research integrity (as set out for instance in the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)).
- b. Selected fellowship recipients must thus carry out the action in compliance with:
  - ethical processes and regulations at the host centre;
  - H2020 ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity); and
  - applicable international, EU, national and local law.
- c. Funding will not be granted for activities carried out outside the EU if they are prohibited in ALL Member States or for activities which destroy human embryos (for example, for obtaining stem cells), as per EU rules. Research activities must also have an exclusive focus on civil application. In addition, any activities involving research on human embryos or embryonic stem cell will require – before commencing - an additional, formal and official approval by the EU Research Executive Agency (to be requested via ERS for selected fellowships) which may take several weeks.
- d. Moreover, in line with Horizon 2020's regulations, this research will NOT be financed by the RESPIRE4 programme:
  - activities that aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes;
  - activities that intend to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed);
  - activities that intend to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.
- e. The main ethics issues that must be addressed under H2020 are, as identified by the EU: *human embryos/foetuses (in particular human embryonic stem cells), human participants, human cells and tissues, personal data, Non-EU countries, environment & health and safety, dual use and misuse, use of animals in research, and other (e.g. research integrity)*.
- f. Where research activities are carried out in Third Countries (TC), for instance (but not exclusively) during Global Fellowships, the EU's ethical standards, principles and regulations for H2020 apply and no exception will be made even if laws in the TC allow to carry out research in contrast with the H2020 principles. Horizon 2020 funding cannot be granted for activities carried out outside the EU if they are prohibited in all Member States.
- g. Please also closely refer to the [H2020 Online Manual](#) (under cross-cutting themes/ethics) for further information about ethics at EU level. This includes guidance specific to different ethical issues (e.g. under the "How to complete your Ethics Self-Assessment" document) as well as the contact form for the H2020 Ethics Review Helpdesk for any specific queries on ethical principles at EU level.

### 5.2 Research on animals

- a. Furthermore, in terms of research involving animals, ERS supports the 3Rs (replacement, reduction, refinement) guiding principles for ethical use of animal testing. Applicants should thus integrate a 3Rs strategy and plan, and demonstrate the use of replacement, reduction and refinement techniques in their research proposal involving animals, where applicable.
- b. Further information and definitions are available on the websites below. Please note that ERS has no link with these organisations.
  - ARRIVE guidance ([www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-Guidance](http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-Guidance) )
  - <https://www.understandinganimalresearch.org.uk/>
  - <http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/the-3rs>

### **5.3 Research Integrity**

- a. In line with H2020, fellowship recipients and host centres must respect the highest standards of research integrity as set out, for instance, in the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#).
- b. This means that fellowship recipients and host centres need to comply with the following fundamental principles:
  - Reliability in ensuring the quality of research reflected in the design, methodology, analysis and use of resources;
  - Honesty in developing, undertaking, reviewing, reporting and communicating research in a transparent, fair and unbiased way;
  - Respect for colleagues, research participants, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage and the environment; and
  - Accountability for the research from idea to publication, for its management and organisation, for training, supervision, and mentoring and for its wider impacts.
- c. The host centre, particularly the host supervisor, as well as the fellowship recipient must ensure that the research project is carried out following good research practices and refraining from any research integrity violations described in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. This does not change other obligations under the RESPIRE programme or under applicable international, EU, national and local law, all of which still apply.

### **5.4 Compliance & Monitoring**

- a. As part of the RESPIRE4 Online Application platform, applicants will need to identify potential ethical issues and explain how they will be addressed so as to conform to international, EU, national and local law as well as H2020 principles.
- b. During the peer-review process, ERS College of Experts reviewers will also closely assess ethical compliance. Moreover, additional ethics checks will be carried out by independent ethics experts on applications shortlisted for interviews.
- c. Further to these independent ethics checks, specific additional conditions or follow-up remedial measures may be set in terms of ethics, which fellowship recipients and host centres will need to integrate in the implementation of the research activities and project. ERS will closely monitor ethical and integrity compliance throughout the duration of the RESPIRE4 fellowship.
- d. All research projects and activities must be submitted for ethics and any other needed reviews for approval, by the local review board/committee at the host centre (or equivalent). Moreover, fellowship recipients and host centres must have obtained before commencing research activities raising a potential ethical issue:
  - any ethics committee/authority opinion required under national law; and
  - any notification or authorisation for activities raising ethical issues required under national and/or European law needed for implementing the tasks in question.
- e. Copies of all these ethics documents (e.g. opinions, approvals, notifications, authorisations) specific to the fellowship research project must be submitted to ERS as soon as possible following the awarding of the fellowship and, at the very latest, by the time of the first interim report (i.e. six months after the start of the fellowship).
- f. If the above-mentioned documents are not in English, they must be submitted together with a signed summary in English, which shows that the research tasks in question are covered and includes the conclusions of the committee or authority concerned (if available). This summary should show that the opinions/authorisations/notifications cover the action activities and should include conclusions, recommendations and, if applicable, conditions imposed (e.g. the use of animals is authorised but limited to a certain number).
- g. The above-mentioned documents and a summary of the remedial actions taken (if applicable following the ethics review) may be sent to independent ethics reviewers for additional feedback.
- h. It will not be possible to proceed with any research with potential ethical implications before the ERS has received a copy of all documents proving compliance with existing EU/national legislation and H2020 principles.
- i. Fellowship recipients and host centres will need to report regularly on any potential ethics issues and how they are being addressed, as applicable to their projects, for example, through the interim reports to be submitted to ERS.
- j. ERS strongly suggests that applicants and their host centre start all the necessary requests for ethical permission or any formal permission as set out above, well before the fellowship start date. They should target to be granted all formal permissions for the start date of the fellowship. Failure

to do this may severely impact funding projects and ERS will not accept any delay on the project caused by this matter.

- k. Any evidence of suspicion of breaches of ethical conduct and/or scientific integrity before, during (or after) the fellowship will lead to a rapid assessment by ERS (e.g. ethics experts, ERS Fellowships & Awards Director, ERS Science Council, ERS Ethics & Integrity Committee) and may lead to the termination of the fellowship and – as needed - other actions towards the fellowship recipient, host centre and concerned authorities.

## 6. Career development, secondments and outreach

### 6.1 Career development

- a. RESPIRE4 places a significant emphasis on career development, with regard to support provided by the host centres (e.g. high-quality infrastructure, scientific mentor, state-of-the-art facilities). Please also refer to section 4.
- b. The fellowship is also a great opportunity to further get involved with ERS and integrate within the Society’s scientific and educational activities. ERS will provide career development in line with the list hereunder. Some of the elements listed below will continue to be available post-fellowship.
- ERS appointed external mentor (from a different discipline);
  - Support (max. twice per event during whole fellowship) towards participation in ERS’ two flagship events (e.g. yearly ERS International Congress and Lung Science Conference - LSC) and opportunity to submit abstracts for such events;
  - Informal MeetUp minimum twice per year (LSC & ERS Congress) for RESPIRE4 fellowship recipients;
  - Invitation to join ERS College of Experts (e.g. peer-review of fellowship applications);
  - Early Career Member Sessions organised twice yearly at ERS International Congress & LSC on career development topics;
  - Opportunity to get involved in ERS Early Career Member Committee (e.g. Competence List via myERS) for ERS members under 40 years of age;
  - Opportunity for ERS members to select up to three Assemblies/Groups via myERS;
  - Networking (e.g. Congress & LSC dedicated networking opportunities, RESPIRE MeetUp);
  - Wider ERS scientific and educational activities (e.g. ERS Research Seminars, ERS School, ERS free webinars, ERS Satellites, Professional Development Courses etc);
  - ERS newsletter, ERS App and ERS social media with latest respiratory news (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram) as well as ERS Recommender (via myERS) with automatic suggestions of related activities;
  - Other – depending on the needs of each fellowship recipient and research project.
- c. Accepted fellowship recipients will be strongly encouraged to become ERS members during the fellowship to maximise opportunities for career development and to get involved in the Society. Opportunities exist for [joint membership](#) with other societies at reduced rates.

### 6.2 Secondments

- a. Potential secondments in the academic and non-academic sector, including industry, can be envisaged during the fellowship depending on the needs of the fellowship recipient and that of the research project, as per table hereunder.

| Type                       | Country / timeline   | Details  |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>European Fellowship</b> | Must be in MS or AC – see also table under 2.1<br>Can be requested at any time, but please allow at least one month for approval | Max. of 6 months (single period or split into short periods)<br>Overall fellowship duration will not be extended |

|                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Global Fellowship</b> | Can be in MS, AC, TC – see also table under 2.1<br>Can be requested at any time, but please allow at least one month for approval | Max. of 6 months (single period or split into short periods)<br>Overall fellowship duration will not be extended |
|--------------------------|---|--|

- b. All secondments need to be planned and integral to the research project, with specific supervision in place, and should significantly and meaningfully add to the value of the fellowship. Secondments offering exposure to other disciplines or sectors are particularly encouraged but should always be integral to the RESPIRE4 research project.
- c. All secondments need to be agreed with the host supervisor/centre and a formal request (e.g. letter on headed paper signed by fellowship recipient and host supervisor, commitment letter from non-academic sector) submitted to ERS in advance for approval.
- d. If applicants are already aware of any potential secondments at the application phase, they may include relevant information in the online application form. However, this is not strictly mandatory, in order to give the flexibility for fellowship recipients and host centres to secure this at a later stage.
- e. It is solely the responsibility of the fellowship recipient and host centre to identify a potential secondment, liaise with the relevant organisation as well as arrange logistics and administration. The host centre should be able to provide specific assistance / contacts through its own networks / collaborations.
- f. Short visits (see also next point) do not qualify as secondments and can only represent a small part of the overall project. On the other hand, secondments should be well-structured, planned in considerable advance and entail specific supervision, in cooperation with the main host supervisor.
- g. The fellowship is to be held exclusively at the host centre (or host centres for Global Fellowships), except for one-off short visits of around 1-2 weeks (e.g. conference, congresses) and secondments agreed/approved by ERS. Any one-off period over 1-2 weeks in another host country/centre or additional, recurrent visits to the same lab (even if the visits last a few days each) may constitute a secondment, which will need to be agreed in advance and be justified in light of the needs of the RESPIRE4 fellowship research project.
- h. During standard secondments, the host centre and the fellowship recipient should ensure all RESPIRE4 requirements (e.g. employment contract, financials, social security coverage, ethics) are still being met. In principle, the fellowship recipient will still be under employment contract with the host centre and seconded to the external organisation. It is strongly recommended for the host centre to finalise an agreement with the organisations providing the secondment, in cooperation with the fellowship recipient.

### **6.3 Outreach & dissemination**

- a. In line with H2020 principles, ERS is highly committed to encourage fellowship recipients to get involved in dissemination and public awareness activities and recognises the need to bring together the scientific community, patients, the public, to effectively communicate on respiratory diseases and their impact. It is essential that the results of the research are disseminated and help shape policy-making and current practices (e.g. industry, NGOs, policies etc).
- b. Fellowship recipients will need to put in place additional outreach activities aimed at the general public and/or participate in existing ones, particularly at the host centre, and are asked to identify them already at the application phase. Some examples may include: press articles/video aimed at general public, participation in European Researchers' Night, presentations to schools (e.g. science days, open days).
- c. As a means to bring lung diseases to the attention of a non-specialized non-professional audience, in line with H2020, ERS will ask fellowship recipients to write a mandatory lay summary targeting the general public already at the application phase (see section 7.4). The lay summary should be updated during the fellowship (i.e. interim reports) and may be used for wider ERS/ELF dissemination and public awareness activities.
- d. On the other hand, dissemination activities to promote the results of the project may include publications (section 11.2) and patents, among others.

## 7. Application Process

### 7.1 Online platform

- Applications and all supporting documents must be submitted in English through the ERS online application platform (via myERS). The link & further information can be found on the [RESPIRE4 webpage](#).
- Applicants can quickly and easily create a myERS account for free without needing to be members, should they not have one already: <https://my.ersnet.org/>. This only takes a few minutes, but it is needed to access the application form via myERS.
- An automated abstract will summarise each application, based on the information provided online. Please check carefully the automatically generated abstract summary (by clicking on MORE and then PRINT within the online fellowship platform) at your end before submission, as this document, along with the Project Description (see 7.3) and Home Reference Form (see 7.4) will be provided to both reviewers (ERS College of Experts) and interviewers (Fellowships & Awards Working Group) during the evaluation phase. On the other hand, a copy of the Lay Summary (see 7.4) will be provided to the reviewers as well as to the patient and/or ELF representative during the interview phase, if shortlisted. All other documents will be used for eligibility purposes.
- The deadline for submitting application files and documents is **1 May 2021 (23:59 CEST)** for the 2<sup>nd</sup> call of RESPIRE4. There will be no extensions granted. Applications with missing files/information may not be processed for selection.
- It is strongly recommended to submit the application well in advance of the call deadline to avoid any last-minute problems (e.g. technical, etc), which cannot be considered as extenuating circumstances. It is the responsibility of the fellowship applicant to ensure that there is sufficient time for submission, including collecting all the required documents and signatures.
- Applicants can only submit ONE application per each call and must choose in the system between: 24-month European Fellowship OR 36-month Global Fellowship.
- Within the online application platform, applicants need to declare any conflict of interest. For further information, please also refer to the [ERS by-laws](#).

### 7.2 Area of research

- Applicants must identify the main area(s) of the research project by selecting three keywords within the below group (one keyword for each one of the three groups) in the fellowship application platform. The selection of keywords is crucial to the reviewing process of the submitted application. Applications will be sorted and categorized into thematic reviewing Groups according to the area of the proposed research project. Reviewers will be allocated and matched with Groups, based on their expertise and the main area(s) of the thematic Group.

| Keywords                        |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Group 1                         | Group 2   | Group 3                                  |
| Airway Diseases                 | Acute lung injury and critical care                       | Applied health service research          |
| Interstitial Lung Diseases      | Asthma and allergy  | Cell and Molecular Biology               |
| Paediatric Respiratory Diseases | CF and non-CF bronchiectasis                              | Endoscopy and Interventional Pulmonology |
| Pulmonary Vascular Diseases     | COPD and smoking  | Epidemiology                             |
| Respiratory Critical Care       | Epidemiology, occupational and environmental lung disease | General respiratory patient care         |
| Respiratory Infections          | E-health and m-health                                     | Imaging                                  |
| Sleep and Breathing disorders   | Genetics  | Physiology                               |
| Thoracic Oncology               | Interstitial and orphan lung disease                      | Public Health                            |
|                                 | Lung biology and experimental studies                     | Pulmonary function testing               |
|                                 | Lung cancer   | Respiratory Intensive Care               |
|                                 | Lung imaging  | Surgery                                  |
|                                 | Lung structure and function                               | Transplantation                          |



|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | Mechanisms of lung disease              |  |
|  | Paediatric pulmonology                  |  |
|  | Physiotherapy                           |  |
|  | Pulmonary pharmacology and therapeutics |  |
|  | Pulmonary vascular disease              |  |
|  | Pulmonary rehabilitation                |  |
|  | Respiratory clinical practice           |  |
|  | Respiratory infections and tuberculosis |  |
|  | Sleep medicine                          |  |

### 7.3 Project description

- a. This is one of the main elements of the application. The separate project description should not exceed five (5) pages including references (font size 12 pts Arial or Times New Roman) and should detail / expand on what already presented in the online application form.
- b. Compliance with the required length is mandatory. Any document longer than required will be truncated by ERS.
- c. The document should describe the proposed research project in detail, including its aims, objectives, hypothesis, methods, state-of-the-art, ethics and suitability of the host supervisor and host institution. There should be a clear and realistic work plan with clear steps and with a scope achievable within the set timeframe.
- d. The value of the project for career development should be stated as well as how the proposal adds value (e.g. impact on patients & wider society, potential outputs, outreach/dissemination) to respiratory research and the European Research Area. Any potential requests for secondment in the academic or non-academic sector (see section 6) or links/involvement with the non-academic sector should be highlighted here, if relevant.
- e. For European Fellowships (only), the research project proposal should realistically cover 24 months and be developed by the applicant, in cooperation with (only) ONE host supervisor. For Global Fellowships (only), instead, the research project proposal should realistically cover 36 months and be developed by the applicant, in cooperation with the TWO host supervisors (the one for the initial outgoing phase as well as the one for the return phase).
- f. For Global Fellowships (only), the project carried out during the return phase should be the continuation of the project started during the initial outgoing phase and therefore integral part of the very same proposal. Applicants should clearly identify which steps take place in which country and how they relate to each other.

### 7.4 Additional files

- a. A number of documents including the above-mentioned Project Description (see section 7.3) need to be submitted via the online application platform, as listed hereunder. Please note that further documents may be requested throughout the evaluation process if needed or that you may be contacted at a later stage following the eligibility checks (see section 8). In addition, applicants shortlisted to proceed to the interview phase may be asked for additional documents, for instance, in terms of the transnational mobility rule.
- b. Applicants should upload the following documents on the online application platform all in pdf format by the call deadline:
  - i. A **research project description** including references (5 pages max). See also section 7.3 above.
  - ii. A **lay summary** (1 page max, font size 12 pts Arial or Times New Roman): This should be a brief summary of the proposed research (e.g. rationale, background, expected outputs/outcomes, long-term impact), also highlighting where the fellowship fits in with the applicant's previous background and career development goals. This document is different from the scientific Project Description (see section 7.2), as the lay summary should be written in plain English and in a such way that a non-scientist can easily understand the aims, outcomes and potential relevance to future practice (e.g. patients). Should it be useful, applicants can find several websites with some advice on writing lay summaries, including

guidance from [Breathe](#), [NIHR](#) and [Elsevier](#). The [Hemingway App](#) is also useful to check and simplify writing. This aligns with H2020's increasing focus on outreach.

- iii. **Home Supervisor Reference Form:** Please download the template form from the online application platform (under "Files") and send this to your Home Supervisor (or equivalent). The form explains what is meant by Home Supervisor (or equivalent), who should fill out and sign the form. If an applicant has already applied for the 1<sup>st</sup> call of RESPIRE4, s/he should still ask the Home Supervisor (or equivalent) to fill out another the Home Supervisor Reference Form specific to the 2<sup>nd</sup> call.

Once completed, the Home Supervisor Reference Form can be sent directly to ERS ([fellowships@ersnet.org](mailto:fellowships@ersnet.org)) on a confidential basis by the home supervisor, if s/he wishes. Or alternatively it can be sent to the applicant, who will upload it on the application online form. In both cases, the applicant is responsible for timely submission by the call deadline.

- iv. **Host Commitment Declaration Form:** Please download the template form from the online application platform (under "Files") and send this to your proposed Host supervisor (or Host supervisors for Global Fellowships), as the main person responsible at the host centre for the fellowship. In addition, this form must be countersigned by a legal representative of the host centre (or person responsible for contracts), therefore please allow at least several weeks for this purpose. While the host centre already completed the Host Application Online Form (including section A) to be pre-registered and commit to key RESPIRE4 principles, the Host Commitment Declaration Form refers to these commitments in relation to a specific applicant.

If an applicant has already applied for the 1<sup>st</sup> call of RESPIRE4, s/he should still ask the Host Supervisor (or Host supervisors for Global Fellowships) to fill out another the Host Commitment Declaration Form specific to the 2<sup>nd</sup> call.

For Global Fellowships (only), each one of the two host supervisors (the one for the initial outgoing phase as well as the one for the return phase to Europe) will need to fill out the Host Commitment Declaration Form; therefore, two separate forms will need to be submitted (one per each host centre).

- v. **Copy of PhD degree OR proof of 4-year FULL-TIME research experience** (e.g. letter from university, etc) including copy of latest degree (e.g. MSc, MRes, MD, etc).
  - vi. **Copy of your ID card or passport.** In addition, for Global Fellowship (only): For non-EU nationals applying for Global Fellowship only, **proof of long-term residency** in EU MS or H2020 AC should also be attached. See also point 3.1 above for the full definition and further information.
  - vii. **Applicant Signed Declaration:** Please download the template form from the online application platform (under "Files"), fill it out, sign and upload.
- c. Kindly note that the last four of the documents listed above will be kept strictly confidential within the European Respiratory Society and will not be shared with reviewers. They are used exclusively to determine the applicant's eligibility for the programme. Other documents will be shared with reviewers and interviewers on a confidential basis for the sole purpose of the evaluation process.
  - d. Please visit the ERS website for further information about the [ERS Privacy Policy](#).

## 8. Evaluation & selection process

- a. ERS research fellowship programmes are under the responsibility of the ERS Science Council, which is under the accountability of the ERS Executive Committee. The latter is accountable for the final endorsement following recommendations made by the Science Council. In order to keep a high standard of applications and quality of the proposed research projects, ERS is strictly enforcing these management rules.
- b. Upon application, submitted applications will undergo eligibility checks. Only applications deemed eligible as per [May 2021 RESPIRE4 Application Guidance](#) will proceed to scientific peer-review.
- c. Applications for all RESPIRE4 Fellowships (whether European or Global Fellowships) will be reviewed together, according to the overall evaluation process and criteria.
- d. The selection is made by two distinct groups of experts:
  - i. An evaluation process with in-depth review of the application and supporting documents, with remote scoring and shortlisting by ERS College of Experts members. Reviewers are already asked at this stage to comment on ethics and potential ethics concerns.

- ii. An interview process with shortlisted applicants by the ERS Fellowships & Awards Working Group panel and ERS Fellowships & Awards Director. Shortlisted applications will also undergo a more in-depth ethics review in parallel.
- e. Final selection will be passed on to the ERS Science Council for validation. The final endorsement will be made by the ERS Executive Committee.
- f. Experts' task and responsibility are to assess the research project and supporting documents based on criteria provided below, in line with the Grant Agreement with the EU.

| 1 <sup>st</sup> step evaluation - Review of applications (ERS College of Experts) |        |  |
|---|--------|--|
| Criteria  | Weight | Sub-criteria   |
| Applicant's qualifications  | 30%    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of CV</li> <li>• Scientific record (e.g. publications, grants, talks)</li> <li>• Overall potential to carry out the project successfully</li> <li>• <b>Important note:</b> career breaks, variations in the chronological order of CV or unusual pathways (e.g. reorientations, candidates from other disciplines) will not be penalised</li> </ul>   |
| Career development  | 20%    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality and feasibility of Career Development Plan (or Career Plan)</li> <li>• Potential of fellowship and research project to enhance and advance the fellow's research skills</li> </ul>  |
| Research project & impact   | 40%    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of topic to respiratory research</li> <li>• Potential impact (e.g. patient related outcomes, translational potential, policy-making)</li> <li>• Novelty &amp; innovation potential</li> <li>• Adequacy of approach, methodology and work plan</li> <li>• Feasibility and quality of the design, including back up-plan</li> <li>• Ethical processes</li> <li>• Dissemination &amp; outreach plan</li> <li>• Capacity to convey scientific text to the public (lay summary)</li> </ul> |
| Research environment  | 10%    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific/technical competence and expertise of host centre, in relation to specific candidate and research project</li> <li>• Potential of fellowship to lead to new international collaborations</li> <li>• Opportunity for suitable interactions with co-workers</li> </ul>   |

- g. During both 1st and 2nd step, each criterion will be scored as following:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 5 | Outstanding quality -should be funded   |
| 4 | Excellent quality but areas left for improvement-should be considered for funding |
| 3 | Good quality but many weaknesses-should not be funded                             |
| 2 | Below average quality threshold -should not be funded                             |
| 1 | Poor quality-should not be funded   |

- h. The College of Experts evaluators will also be asked to provide general comments in alignment with the assigned scores, with the aim of providing feedback to successful and unsuccessful applicants.

- i. Following the scoring and peer-review process, the weighted average is calculated for each applicant and then the ranking by median is established. During the screening process, College of Experts reviewers can view the ranking list and provide comments. Based on the ranking list and comments of the College of Experts, the ERS Fellowships & Awards Director validates the list of top ranked applications to be selected for the interview phase.
- j. Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed by a panel of 5-6 interviewees from the ERS Fellowships & Awards Working Group led by the ERS Fellowships & Awards Director. A patient representative and/or European Lung Foundation (ELF) also participate in the interviews as observers (meaning that they do not score the applicants but can ask questions).
- k. Shortlisted applicants will be contacted around early July 2021. Interviews are currently planned online on 12-13 July 2021. Applicants should thus keep these dates free for the time being.
- l. The interview will last around 25 minutes and it will consist of a 10-minute presentation by the applicant and 15-minute discussion where the evaluators will ask specific questions focusing on: 1) the research project and 2) applicant's profile. The interview panel will score according to two criteria during the 2<sup>nd</sup> step (interviews), as per table hereunder.

| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> step evaluation – Interview (ERS Fellowships &amp; Awards Working Group)</b> |        |   |
|--|--------|---|
| Criteria   | Weight | Sub-criteria  |
| Research project   | 40%    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance and contribution of the project beyond the state of the art</li> <li>• Projected impact</li> <li>• Ground-breaking nature</li> <li>• Appropriateness of the methodology and ethical approach</li> <li>• Feasibility and time scale, including back-up plan</li> <li>• Dissemination &amp; outreach potential</li> <li>• Impact of project on the development of candidate's professional career</li> </ul>   |
| Candidate's profile  | 60%    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills/competences with respect to research project</li> <li>• Ability to present and defend project effectively</li> <li>• Intellectual capacity</li> <li>• Creativity and ability to conduct original research</li> <li>• Commitment to ERS and respiratory field</li> <li>• Leadership potential</li> <li>• Career path vision &amp; plan</li> <li>• <b>Important note:</b> career breaks, variations in the chronological order of CV or unusual pathways (e.g. reorientation, candidates from other disciplines) will not be penalised</li> </ul> |

- m. Following the interview process, the interview panel will put forward a proposal with recommendations for the selection of RESPIRE4 fellowship recipients to the ERS Science Council, to then be ratified by the ERS Executive Committee. This process may take several weeks. Not all interviewed applicants will receive a fellowship.
- n. Decisions are final and appeals only considered if formal mistakes have been made by the ERS.
- o. Applicants will then be informed during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of August 2021 of the final outcome of their application and will receive feedback from the evaluation process (peer-review and – if applicable – interview). Feedback will focus on areas of improvement for future applications; applicants have the possibility to formally write to the ERS Fellowships & Awards Director, should they wish for further clarification or have any queries regarding the results and feedback.
- p. Assessments are strictly confidential and will not be shared outside of ERS.

## 9. Equal opportunities & less represented countries

- a. RESPIRE4 fellowship recipients will be selected through an open, merit-based, impartial, fair, equal and transparent selection procedure, based on scientific excellence and taking into account only the period(s) in which each candidate was active in research.
- b. More specifically, gender balance and equal opportunities are fundamental principles of H2020. For this purpose, a dedicated family allowance (see section 10.1) is available within RESPIRE4. More flexible working arrangements may also be considered for family or personal reasons (see section 3.4).
- c. Applicants are recommended to take into account gender and diversity aspects in all the research project lifecycle (e.g. design, data collection, analysis, etc), particularly (but not exclusively) when working with humans (e.g. patients, etc). Selected fellowship recipients will report on this topic in the interim reports, if applicable.
- d. There is no age limit and applications from researchers returning from a career break are encouraged. Returnees from a career break may be offered additional support if and as needed (e.g. twinning with former fellowship recipient).
- e. In terms of returning from a career break, the same definition as the MSCA IF programme is applied in this case: 'the experienced researchers must have had a career break in research i.e. they were not active in research for a continuous period of at least 12 months within the 18 months immediately prior to the reference date for submission of proposals' (period from 1 December 2019 until the reference date of 1 May 2021, for the purpose of the 2<sup>nd</sup> call).
- f. With regard to the above-mentioned definition, 'active in research' means being employed or holding a scholarship in research; parental leaves and unpaid leaves of absence will not be counted as periods of active engagement in research, even if a formal employment relationship exists during these periods. Publication activities or mere association to a university (i.e. any other link to the university that is not considered as an employment contract or a fellowship agreement) are not taken into account either as time active in research. The professional status confirming the experienced researcher meets this definition of 'not active in research' (e.g. unemployment, periods of employment outside research, parental or sick leave) must be clearly explained in the online application.
- g. Applicants have the opportunity to highlight the reasons and merits of a career break in the online application form. During the evaluation, reviewers and interviewers will be instructed to evaluate the period during which applicants were actually active in scientific research. Further documents as evidence of meeting the definition of a career break may be asked particularly in case the applicant is shortlisted for an interview.
- h. Apart from applicants returning from a career break (see above definition), applications with host centres in less represented countries (as defined by the EU MSCA COFUND scheme – 2018 call) are also encouraged: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Israel, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tunisia, Ukraine.
- i. In line with the Grant Agreement, during the evaluation process, peer-reviewers will have the possibility to highlight as part of the screening process, 1-2 proposal with a host institution based in less represented countries and/or applicants with a career break. On this basis, the ERS Fellowships & Awards Director may decide to interview additional applicants.

## 10. Allowances

### 10.1 Grant allowances

- a. ERS RESPIRE4 grant covers the following allowances (full-time rates), covered through ERS/EU co-funding:

| Type             | Amount  | Details  |
|------------------|---|--|
| Living allowance | Baseline of €60'000.- yearly adjusted to country correction coefficient (CCC) | Gross amount that may be taxable & subject to deductions (i.e. compulsory social security employer & employee contributions) |

|   |          |   |
|---|----------|---|
| Mobility allowance – for moving to a new country & career development | €6'000.- | Yearly gross amount<br>May be taxable depending on country/centre |
| Family allowance – <u>only if applicable</u>                          | €6'000.- | Yearly gross amount<br>May be taxable depending on country/centre |

- b. The living allowance is calculated based on a baseline gross rate of €60'000.- and is adjusted according to the country correction coefficient (CCC). This means that a fellowship recipient may be awarded more or less than a gross living allowance of €60'000.- per year depending on the CCC. For instance, the living allowance would be adjusted to €57'240.- yearly for a fellowship with Spain as a host country (CCC: 95.4%).

The CCC rates for a number of countries, notably in Europe, can be found in the table below. Please consult Table 2 (p. 94-95) in the [Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-2020 \(MSCA Actions\)](#) for CCC rates of other countries. As no new figures are available by the time of the launch of the 2<sup>nd</sup> call, the figures for the 2018-2020 Work Programme will be used instead throughout the duration of the 2<sup>nd</sup> call.

|                             |        |   |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|---|--------|
| Australia (AU)              | 104.4% | Japan (JP)  | 105.5% |
| Austria (AT)                | 106.7% | Lithuania (LT)                                    | 72.5%  |
| Albania (AL)                | 65.3%  | Luxembourg (LU)                                   | 100.0% |
| Armenia (AM)                | 75.4%  | Latvia (LT)                                       | 77.7%  |
| Belgium (BE)                | 100.0% | Malta (MT)  | 84.4%  |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina (BA) | 69.0%  | Moldova (the Republic of) (MD)                    | 62.01% |
| Brazil (BR)                 | 97.9%  | Montenegro (ME)                                   | 64.8%  |
| Bulgaria (BG)               | 62.0%  | North Macedonia (the Republic of) (MK)            | 60.0%  |
| Canada (CA)                 | 87.8%  | Norway (NO)                                       | 130.6% |
| China (CN)                  | 91.7%  | Netherlands (NL)                                  | 107.9% |
| Croatia (HR)                | 83.9%  | Poland (PL)                                       | 75.5%  |
| Cyprus                      | 82.6%  | Portugal (PT)                                     | 84.2%  |
| Czech Republic              | 81.78% | Romania (RO)                                      | 68.8%  |
| Denmark (DK)                | 135.0% | Russia (RU)                                       | 105.4% |
| Estonia (EE)                | 79.4%  | Serbia (RS)                                       | 67.3%  |
| Faroe Islands (the) (FO)    | 135.0% | Slovakia (SK)                                     | 80.4%  |
| Finland (FI)                | 120.8% | Slovenia (SI)                                     | 86.1%  |
| France (FR)                 | 115.7% | Spain (ES)  | 95.4%  |
| Germany (DE)                | 97.0%  | Sweden (SE)                                       | 121.8% |
| Greece (EL)                 | 88.7%  | Switzerland (CH)                                  | 121.2% |
| Georgia (GE)                | 75.3%  | Tunisia (TN)                                      | 67.5%  |
| Hungary (HU)                | 77.4%  | Turkey (TR)                                       | 82.1%  |
| Iceland (IS)                | 115.3% | Ukraine (UA)                                      | 70.8%  |
| Ireland (IE)                | 115.6% | United Kingdom (UK)                               | 139.8% |
| Israel (IL)                 | 106.1% | United States of America (US)                     | 99.1%  |
| Italy (IT)                  | 104.4% | <i>For other countries, please see link below</i> |        |

\*Source: [Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-2020](#) (MSCA Actions, p. 94-95)

- c. The same rates as the MSCA IF 2018-2020 Work programme, managed by the Research Executive Agency on behalf of the EU, will be used. The rates established for this 2<sup>nd</sup> call will not be revised at any point thereafter and for any reason.
- d. For Global Fellowships (only), the CCC rates of both countries (outgoing phase + return phase) should be used. Therefore, the CCC for the TC country should be applied during the outgoing phase while the CCC for the country of the return to Europe should be applied during the return phase. This aligns with current practices within other MSCA programmes (e.g. MSCA IF).
- e. The living allowance is a gross contribution to the salary costs of the researcher. Consequently, the net salary should result from deducting all compulsory (employer & employee) social security

contributions as well as direct taxes (e.g. income tax) from the gross amounts, depending on each country.

- f. The mobility allowance is a gross flat-rate of €6'000.- yearly for the benefit of the fellowship recipient to cover costs associated with moving to/from a new country and/or career development (e.g. training, participation in conferences, open access fees, membership fees for various associations/societies etc). In principle, it will be paid as a lump sum from the host centre to the fellowship recipient (e.g. monthly instalments along with the salary), but it is likely to be subject to taxation depending on the country.  
However, ERS will remain open to discussion for the host to disburse the mobility allowance to the fellowship recipient on the basis of invoices/receipts linked to attendance to training, conferences, etc (rather than as a lump sum), if the s/he so wishes and it is feasible for the host centre. Indeed, this sometimes may mean, depending on the host country, that the mobility allowance is not subject to taxation. If this latter option is agreed, then the reimbursement of mobility funds from the host to the fellowship recipient will need to be closely monitored to ensure that the full amount is transferred by the end of the fellowship.
- g. Selected fellowship recipient will additionally be granted a gross, flat-rate family allowance of € 6'000 per fellow-year, if applicable. Family is defined – within the framework of the EU H2020 - as persons linked to the researcher by: 1) marriage or 2) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognized by the legislation of the country where this relationship was formalized or 3) dependent children who are actually being maintained by the researcher. The family allowance may be, however, taxable depending on the country.
- h. Kindly note that family status of a researcher will be determined at the at the time of the reference date of 1 May 2021 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> call and will not be revised thereafter, as per EU rules.
- i. The host centre may pay a top-up from another budget source (except for other H2020 funds) in order to complement the above-mentioned allowances, if it wishes and as needed.
- j. No further additional funding will be available from the ERS nor the EU, apart from the allowances for the benefit of fellowship recipients (see 10.1.a) and the management cost contribution destined towards the management of the fellowship (see 4.k). It is up to host centres to ensure internally – prior to the fellowship application – that adequate resources/funds are in place to ensure the delivery of the research project and successful completion of the fellowship, in relation to the specific applicant.
- k. Apart from the allowances provided by ERS/EU as set out above, all other costs (e.g. overheads, bench fees, research project costs, consumables, lab equipment, support from technician, specific equipment/software) will therefore need to be covered by the host centre through other sources of funding, except for funds provided through H2020 in light of EU rules. The host centre should detail in the Budget & Costing section (within the Host Commitment Declaration Form), what is the budget for the research project and how it will be covered.
- l. The model for RESPIRE4 is quite similar to what used by the EU for MSCA IFs, although there are specific features and figures for RESPIRE4 (MSCA COFUND). The net amount to be received by selected fellowship recipient will vary from country to country and even from employer to employer, in line with national legislation (e.g. taxes, social deductions, etc) and institutional policies.

m. **IMPORTANT:** Potential fellowship applicants need to discuss in detail and agree all aspects of the fellowship with the chosen host centre(s) and host supervisor(s) within the wider framework of the May 2021 RESPIRE4 Application Guidance, already at the application phase. This notably includes the detailed distribution of the RESPIRE4 grant and other financial aspects (e.g. min. gross/net salary, social deductions/coverage, gross/net mobility allowance, taxes, exchange rate if applicable etc). This information will be needed to complete the Host Commitment Declaration Form (Budget & Costing section) as part of the online application; the template can be downloaded directly from the platform.

- n. These allowances destined to the fellowship recipient will be transferred via the host centre in Europe (both for European and Global fellowships), which will in turn provide the fellowship recipient with remuneration in line with the RESPIRE4 allowances and the fellow/host contract. The funds will be transferred to the host centre in different instalments upon receipt of the required documents (e.g. copy of contract, submission of interim reports, etc). The Payment Agreement to be signed by ERS and the host centre concerned will set out the payment schedule.

- o. It is up to the applicant to enquire about local conditions, but the host centre(s) should provide him/her with an idea (e.g. local tax rates, cost of living in specific city, social security coverage etc) or help him/her find relevant information for this purpose.
- p. If selected, fellowship recipients and host centres will need to sign a declaration to confirm that there is no double funding or duplication of expenditure covering the full duration of the RESPIRE4 Fellowship.
- q. The currency used for ERS fellowships is the EURO (€). Fellowship instalments are made in EURO, no matter the home and host countries. Host centres not using EURO, should indicate the estimated exchange rate to be used in the Budget & Costing Section (within the Host Commitment Declaration Form) and should adjust this exchange rate annually on the basis of the European Central Bank (ECB) rates over the concerned period. This system is similar to the MSCA IF fellowships.
- r. Please also refer to section 4 on host centre's commitments.

## **10.2 Insurances, taxes and visa**

- a. Fellowship recipients are neither agents nor employees of ERS. ERS accepts no liability for any wrongdoing, damage, actions or activities of fellowship recipients or host centres within the framework of the RESPIRE4 fellowship (and beyond), including with respect to health & safety, insurances, taxes, research costs etc.
- b. The fellowship recipient will be under employment contract with the host centre(s) and therefore an employee of the host centre(s). Please see also section 4.
- c. ERS is not in a position to provide any medical, accident, social insurance coverage and support. The host centre in hosting the fellowship recipient accepts the responsibility of protecting both itself and the fellowship recipient as appropriate to local legislation, in line with national and European standards and regulations. See also section 4.
- d. The fellowship recipient is fully responsible to ensure that any accompanying family members staying in the host country are covered in terms of social security, medical, accident schemes and other necessary schemes where applicable and provided with the adequate level of protection, during the whole fellowship.
- e. ERS is a not-for-profit organisation. ERS fellowships have no tax privileges, which is also the case for RESPIRE4 Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellowships. It is the responsibility of the fellowship recipient and host centre(s) to ensure the payment of any taxes which may be levied upon by the appropriate national authority (in any relevant home/host countries), in relation to the fellowship.
- f. ERS can provide a visa letter – if needed and upon request – if it helps fellowship recipients and host centre(s) with administrative procedure. However, it cannot be held responsible for visa applications and any related outcomes. We encourage applicants to apply for a visa, if one is needed, as soon as possible as visa applications can take time and this point should be carefully considered when identifying the initial start date.

# **11. Reporting, publications & IPR requirements**

## **11.1 Fellowship reporting**

- a. Both the fellowship recipient and the host supervisor are required to submit an interim report six months after the start of the fellowship in order to assess the project's progress. The interim report includes sections where the fellowship recipient will be asked to evaluate and score the host in terms of scientific and administrative support, as well as supervision.
- b. Thereafter, provided that the fellowship is running smoothly, fellowship recipients and host supervisors will need to submit interim reports every 12 months, also depending on the duration of the fellowship. Within two months after the end of the fellowship, both the fellowship recipient and the host supervisor are then required to submit an end-of-project final report to ERS.
- c. Moreover, there will be mandatory evaluation questionnaire and follow-up questionnaire from the EU, at the end of the fellowship as well as two years after its completion respectively.
- d. As the programme is co-funded by EU, ERS may ask host centre and/or fellowship recipient for copies of relevant documents upon request by the EU, up to two years since the end of RESPIRE4 (i.e. up to end of 2027 / early 2028). Moreover, the EU's (and its agencies including REA, OLAF and ECA) rights to carry out audits/checks/reviews/investigations, including ethics checks, extend to the host centres with selected RESPIRE4 fellowship recipients.



## 11.2 Publications & Open Science

- a. The fellowship recipient should acknowledge EU and ERS support in any publication or outcome (e.g. patent applications) directly related to the fellowship research project. A standard phrase will be provided to selected fellowship recipients.
- b. The fellowship recipient should record and update ERS on any publication activity and other outcome (e.g. patent application) resulting from the fellowship, within 2 months.
- c. The fellowship recipient and host centre need to ensure open access (free of charge online access for any user) to all peer reviewed scientific publications directly relating to the project's results, in line with H2020 requirements and as the case across MSCA programmes.
- d. The EU emphasises that open access to scientific publications produced, to some extent, with public funding is beneficial not only for science but also for speeding up innovation and involving citizens and society. Open access does not imply the obligation to publish and does not interfere with the decision to exploit research results commercially.
- e. Fellowship recipients can receive financial support from ERS up to a max. €3000 towards max. one peer-reviewed publication (open access fees if applicable) during the whole fellowship; the published paper will need to be directly related to the fellowship research project. This max. amount will be paid upon receipt of a proof of payment as well as will be reimbursed to the host centre after the submission of the fellowship final report and on the basis of actual costs.
- f. Both the Gold and Green (max. 6-month embargo) options of Open Access are possible. Open access normally implies depositing a machine-readable electronic copy of the publications into a repository, at the latest by the publication time and providing open access to deposited publications and bibliographic metadata via the repository. The second step may take place upon publication (if an electronic version is available for free via the publisher) or – in case of self-archiving – depending on the embargo period (if any), although at the maximum latest within six months of publication. Please contact the ERS Office should you require additional information already at the application phase and/or consult the [H2020 Online Manual](#) (under 'cross-cutting themes' and then 'open access & data management').
- g. Open access also relates to manuscripts published after the end of the fellowship but that are directly related to the results of the RESPIRE4 fellowship. Open access is equally mandatory for publications in which the fellowship recipient is not the 1<sup>st</sup> author as long as they are related to the results of the fellowship project. Further details (e.g. DOI, link to repository, embargo period if green access, fee for golden access) will need to be provided to ERS in the interim & final reports for all concerned publications, as they all need to be entered in EU database.
- h. On the other hand, open access is not mandatory if the publication is not directly related to the results of the fellowship project. A typical case may be when the article is based on data collected before the project starts, then open access requirements would generally not apply as the publication is not linked to the project results.
- i. There is no obligation to grant access to research data. On the other hand, fellowship recipients and host supervisors are encouraged to participate in the [EU Research Data Pilot](#) and to align with the [FAIR data management Guidance](#), also depending on the nature of their research project.

## 11.3 Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

- a. IPR in all its aspects should be covered in the employment contract (see also section 3.3) between fellowship recipient and host centre(s) as well as in any other collaboration/partnership agreements (e.g. for Global fellowships and/or secondments, including in non-academic sector), in line with European and national legislation and also covering the post-fellowship phase. This should be in line with [H2020 standards/regulations](#) as well as national, EU, international laws.
- b. Host centre(s) should inform the fellowship recipient of any related institutional regulations/policies as well as provide IPR-related advice and support if needed (e.g. dedicated helpdesk, specific training courses offered by the host centre, etc). The host centre must — on a royalty-free basis — give the fellowship recipient access to the background as well as to the results necessary for the research training activities and the fellowship research project.
- b. The host centre must, for any results that can be reasonably expected to be commercially or industrially exploited, examine the possibility of protecting them and if possible, reasonable and justified, protect them. The EU may object to any transfer of ownership or to exclusive licencing of results as well as may need to assume ownership of results in specific cases. For further information at the application phase, please contact the ERS Office.

- a. In line with EU Guidance, measures should be taken by the host centre to ensure the exploitation of the results by using them in further research activities; develop, create or market a product or process; create or provide a service or using them in standardisation activities.
- b. The host centre must give access to the results (right to use them) on a royalty free basis to the EU institutions, bodies and agencies for developing, implementing or monitoring EU policies or programmes (these access rights are limited to non-commercial and non-competitive use).
- c. Universities or other public research organisation must take measures to implement the principles set out in Points 1 and 2 of the Code of Practice annexed to the [Commission Recommendation on the management of intellectual property in knowledge transfer activities](#). This does not change any other obligations.

## 12. Enquiries

- a. For any enquiries, please refer to the dedicated [RESPIRE4 webpage](#) as well as the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs) document.
- b. For any other queries, please contact the ERS Office at: [fellowships@ersnet.org](mailto:fellowships@ersnet.org).
- c. We recommend that you contact ERS with any queries well before the application deadline, in order to allow adequate time to reply. ERS may also need to double check some queries with the EU.
- d. Upon selection, fellowship recipients and host centres will receive detailed Rules & Regulations for the implementation phase based on these May 2021 RESPIRE4 Application Guidance.

**Any infringement of the conditions in these May 2021 RESPIRE4 Application Guidance will result in the withdrawal of an application from the selection process or the cancellation of a fellowship already granted**