



APEX Fellowship Programme

Call 2 -2019 Terms & Conditions

Please read this document CAREFULLY before submitting your application

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1. Applying for a Fellowship

Refer to the APEX Application Guidelines for 2019 for all details on the fellowship, proposal preparation and application process.

2. Ethics Criteria

APEX will comply fully with the H2020 ethics policy, including those in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and the European Convention on Human Rights and its supplementary protocols. APEX will not fund:

- 1) research activities aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes,
- 2) research activity intended to modify the genetics of human beings that could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads),
- 3) research activities intended 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.

Applicants must complete an Ethics Issues Table (Application forms, Part A: No.4 Ethics Issues Table). If ethical issues arise, he/she needs to provide additional information and documentation as required in the H2020 *How to complete your ethics self-assessment guide*. Applicants must provide any documentation available at the time of proposal submission. For documents that are not yet available, applicants must explain how they will obtain these documents and provide an approximate timeline for submission. All applications for which ethical issues are flagged will be reviewed by the *Programme Ethical Review Committee* (PERC), who will check whether ethical issues apply to the proposed project, and whether the issues have been adequately addressed by the applicant. The PERC may declare the proposal ineligible, eligible as presented or may ask for additional information and then take a decision. Proposals with ethical clearance will proceed to the next stage of the evaluation process. Proposals without ethical clearance will be declared ineligible.

3. Training and Career Development

3.1 Support and/or additional training in non-research oriented transferable skills

Training and career development are core aspects of the APEX fellowships and it is a condition of the fellowship that fellows actively and fully engage in the career development process.



Fellows will receive induction training in their academic host at the start of their fellowships. All fellows, regardless of host institution, will also receive an induction from the APC management team, to cover additional areas such as Health and Safety in the Lab & Standard Operating Procedures, Intellectual Property procedures/lab notebook training, Introduction to regular APC Fora/Symposia/Journal Clubs/training opportunities, APC-specific HR aspects (holiday procedures, expense claims) and Introduction to participating in APC's Education and Public Engagement programme.

At the start of the fellowship, each fellow will, together with the supervisory team, design a personal Professional Development Plan (PDP) for the fellowship. The development of the PDP will follow the UCC Guidelines for 'Devising Professional Development Plans' (www.ucc.ie/en/devhub/pdp/), including aspects such as 'Guidelines for Career planning for research staff', and 'Research Skills Development Training Paths'. Fellows are responsible for their own development and will be assisted by their supervisory team and the APEX PM in the realisation of their PDP.

The APEX training programme will include the following integral elements:

- Supervised interdisciplinary research project
- Development and regular review of a personal PDP
- Complementary research skills training
- APEX Summer schools
- Transferrable skills training
- Intersectoral and interdisciplinary transfer of knowledge (through secondments and/or short visits)
- Dissemination, public engagement and outreach activities
- Ethics training (if applicable) in UCC prior to the start of all fellowships.

Fellows will be expected to complete a minimum of 3 complementary research skills training courses (half-day sessions) during their fellowship. These courses have been closely aligned to the APC Technology Platforms and are designed to support fellows in achieving a truly multidisciplinary portfolio of research skills. Fellows will also attend and present at group lab meetings, bi-weekly APC Fora (presentations/debate on topical subjects in microbiome



research, often with external speakers), APC Journal Clubs and Research Symposia (twice yearly research meetings with presentations from APC and invited speakers, with an audience of research peers and industry partners). Fellows will complete 3 summer/winter schools, which will be a combination of seminars and blended workshops that will be delivered by professional providers, APC industry partners and host organisation staff. Fellows will also complete a minimum of 3 sessions of Transferable Skills Training during their fellowship.

3.2 Supervision

Each fellow will have one main academic supervisor with suitable research experience in the interdisciplinary research area proposed by the fellow.

A non-academic co-supervisor will be identified by the fellow and academic supervisor prior to application with the help of the APC IP Manager. The non-academic supervisor will be the secondment host supervisor. Together, the academic and non-academic supervisors will form the supervisory team. The APC requires that fellows have regular and sufficiently frequent contact with their academic mentor and secondment mentor.

3.3 Academic mentors

In addition to the Supervisory Team, fellows must choose an Academic Mentor to provide further support. The academic mentor will be a member of APC, or another individual with sufficient experience, with no involvement in the fellow's research project. The fellow and mentor will meet quarterly, to discuss items related to the fellow's career progression and professional 'well-being'.

4. Reporting

Each Fellow is obliged to submit an annual progress report to the project manager documenting the progress of their research project and achievement of the goals set out in the Professional Development Plan.

4.1 Progress monitoring and reports

Monitoring of the fellows will occur at regular meetings with their academic supervisors and secondment supervisors (as appropriate). Monitoring will incorporate individual deliverables



and milestones including all aspects of the fellowship (e.g. training, results, dissemination and public outreach activities). Fellows' PDPs will form the basis of these meetings. Fellows will be required to submit annual reports to the Programme Manager, outlining their project progress, finances and implementation of the PDP. PDPs and annual reports will be monitored annually by the Supervisory Board.

5. Equality

The Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011 outlaw discrimination in a wide range of employment and employment-related areas, including gender, civil status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief, and membership of the traveller community. All academic hosts have equal opportunities policies in place that are based on the above Acts. The hosts' endorsement of the Code and Charter indicate that they work in line with the non-discrimination principles as described therein.

5.1 International researchers

The APEX Programme is open to ERs of any nationality resident anywhere in the world and the PR strategy has been specifically targeted to these applicants.

5.2 Gender Equality

The APEX programme aims to raise gender awareness and promote gender equality in research and innovation, in line with the gender equality strategy outlined in Horizon 2020.

APEX is acutely aware of the importance of gender balance and the need to encourage and foster female involvement in research and innovation. The academic organisations involved in APEX participate in projects and initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality in research and innovation. UCC signed the Athena SWAN Charter and, in 2016, was awarded a bronze award. The APEX programme will be promoted to male and female researchers and response to the first call will be measured (including male /female applications) and corrective actions taken if necessary. Gender balance (minimum 40% female) will be achieved in all committees within APEX and at least one of the three-person international review panel will be female. In



a case where the supervisory team (academic and non-academic supervisor) are of the same gender, fellows will be encouraged to choose an academic mentor of a different gender.

5.3 Career Restart and Reintegration

APEX equally welcomes applications from researchers who wish to resume research in Ireland after a research career break (Career Restart Fellowship). While there will not be an individual ranking list for career restart fellowships due to the moderate size of the programme, Career Restart fellows will be eligible for the relaxed mobility rule. Career breaks will also be taken into account during the evaluation process. Applicants are encouraged to list time spent outside of research/academia, and experts are instructed to value time spent working in industry, as a project manager or IP-specialist etc. Applicants are also advised to list any time spent outside of research due to personal reasons (e.g. maternity/paternity leave, compulsory military service, prolonged illness) so that this can be considered during evaluation.

6. Research Integrity

The APC endorses the 8 principles of the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity on honesty, reliability, objectivity, impartiality, open communication, duty of care for research participants, fairness and responsibility for future science generations. On commencement at APC the researcher will receive an induction session where details of the research conduct policy will be outlined. All researchers must read this policy and ensure that their research is consistent with these principles.

7. Intellectual Property (IP) Rights

IP protection and exploitation of commercially valuable results is of particular importance to the APEX programme. The APEX Intellectual Property rights policy will adhere to MSCA guidelines, which are aligned with those of the APC. The APEX IP policy will apply during fellows' secondments to non-academic partners, and if not already in place, an IP agreement will be put in place before secondments begin. The APEX supervisors, with the assistance of the APC IP & Commercialisation Manager, will train the fellows to identify, record (lab notebooks) and protect IP, and exploit commercially valuable results, with due consideration



of inventorship by the contributory supervisors. Projects will be reviewed at least every 6 months (or upon request from the fellow or PI) by the APC IP Manager to identify possible IP and discuss a policy and timeline to protect data whilst facilitating publication.

8. Data Management and Open Access

Personal data collected for the APEX programme will be stored for the specific purpose and duration of the programme after which the data collected will be destroyed in compliance with Data Protection Guidelines.

UCC has a comprehensive Data Management Policy and Open Access to Publications Policy and the APC and APEX programme operate in compliance with these policies, which have been developed and approved by senior University management and are regularly reviewed to ensure best practice in these areas <https://libguides.ucc.ie/openaccess/uccpublicationspolicy>.

An open science strategy will be developed in tandem with UCC's Digital records policy and will align to the Europeans Commission vision for open innovation, open science, open to the world (3 O's) and the guidelines on FAIR Data Management in Horizon 2020.

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/oa_pilot/h2020-hi-oa-data-mgt_en.pdf

Fellows must align their research to the Open Science Strategy of the programme and develop an individual Data Management Plan (DMP), adhering to the programmes data management policy. DMPs will be developed using the Horizon 2020 FAIR DMP template. The DMP will include information on:

- the handling of research data during and after the end of the project,
- what data is to be collected, processed and/or generated
- which methodology and standards will be applied
- whether data will be shared/made open access and
- how data will be curated & preserved (including after the end of the project).

Fellows' individual DMPs will be reviewed half way through the fellowships and will be approved by the APEX steering committee. A final DMP will be produced and approved at the end of each fellowship. APEX will adhere to the Irish National Principles for Open Access Policy Statement.

<https://www.dri.ie/sites/default/files/files/National%20Principles%20on%20Open%20Access%20Policy%20Statement%20%28FINAL%202023%20Oct%202012%20%29.pdf>

A key element of the policy is that researchers must lodge publications in an open access repository immediately after publication. Publisher copyright, licensing and embargo policies must be respected. The protection of IP arising from the publication takes precedence over open access depositing and any form of publication. APEX publication will be deposited in the national open access repository system (www.rian.ie) where IPR allows.

8.1 Public Announcements

All proposed publications arising from the research work must have the approval of the academic mentor. All public announcements and publications given or authored by the Fellow which arise from the work carried out during their Fellowship must acknowledge that the work was co-funded by Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions under H2020 using the following wording: received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the APEX COFUND Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 754535. All public announcements and publications given or authored by the Fellow which arise from the work carried out during their Fellowship must acknowledge any other source of financial or intellectual contribution as directed by the APEX Programme Manager or Fellow's Supervisor, for example a Science Foundation Ireland award or an Industry Partner contribution. APC sentence for publication "This publication has emanated from research conducted with the financial support of Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) under Grant Number SFI/12/RC 2273 (APC 3 grant no)" or where the publication has emanated from multiple sources of funding "This publication has emanated from research supported in part by a research grant from Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) under Grant Number SFI/12/RC/2273 and by NDP, HEA, HRB etc (as appropriate)".