

HRB Postdoctoral Fellowships: Applying Research into Policy & Practice (ARPP) 2023

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)



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Frequently Asked Questions



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1 General

How do I apply for the ARPP fellowship?

All applications must be made using the HRB online Grant E-Management System GEMS <https://grants.hrb.ie>. Applicants are strongly advised to carefully read the guidance and details of the research areas covered. In order to start an application, the Lead Applicant (LA) must satisfy the conditions of a check list that they will be asked to complete (please refer to Appendix II page 18-19 of the Guidance Notes).

Have there been any changes to the last round of the EIA scheme?

There are two main changes:

1. The definition of **PhD equivalency** in the context of the requirement of the LA to be a post-doctoral or experienced researcher was revised in line with the *'Towards a European Framework for Research Careers'*¹. It is now defined as at least four years 'full time' research experience post-primary degree. Full-time equivalent research experience² is measured from the date when a researcher obtained the degree entitling them 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), even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged.
2. Following the discussion with the international panel in the 2020 round, the **Assessment Criteria** have been revised from five to three and the LA criterion has been given more weight: **The Lead Applicant (40%)**, **The Support (30%)**, and **The Research project (30%)**. You can find more detail in page 15 of the ARPP 2023 Guidance Notes.

2 Lead Applicant/Eligibility

Can a Lead Applicant apply to both HRB postdoctoral fellowship schemes (CSF and ARPP) to have more chance of success?

No, you can apply to only one scheme depending on fulfilment of eligibility criteria. Please contact the HRB if you are not sure which scheme is the best fit for you. Where an applicant submits to both schemes both applications will be rendered ineligible.

Can a Lead Applicant submit more than one application for this call?

No, only one application per LA will be considered in this round.

¹https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf

² **Full-time research experience** means that the research does not have to have been conducted consecutively. As such, career breaks, flexible working arrangements, periods working in other sectors (e.g., industry, health organisation/agency) will be taken into account when assessing the minimum of two and the maximum of six years post PhD (or equivalent) research experience.

Can I apply if I was previously awarded an Applying Research into Policy & Practice Fellowship?

No. If you have previously been awarded an ARPP you are not eligible to apply again. You may wish to apply for the [Emerging Investigator Awards for Health \(EIA\)](#), which is expected to open in 2023.

Does a Lead Applicant need to have a minimum number of publications to be eligible?

There is no minimum number of publications required for eligibility. However, the LA must be able to demonstrate some contribution to scientific knowledge appropriate to the career stage and active research experience.

Does the Lead Applicant need to have a PhD?

Yes. However, if the LA does not have a PhD, they must be able to demonstrate equivalency to PhD ([definition above](#)). Please note that equivalency must be granted before a submission of an application, please contact the HRB to discuss equivalency. You can find the HRB PhD equivalence request form [here](#).

Is there a minimum limit in the years of postdoctoral research after the PhD?

Yes, you must have a minimum of two years active postdoctoral experience² prior to the submission of an application). The number of years post PhD is determined by calendar year and therefore, the PhD must have been successfully defended in the year 2020 at the latest. This means, if working full time with no career breaks, LAs should have started their postdoctoral position no later than January 2021 to qualify as eligible for this round.

Is there a maximum limit in the years of postdoctoral research after the PhD?

Yes, you must have a maximum of six years active postdoctoral experience² prior to the submission of an application. This means, if working full time with no career breaks, LAs should have started their postdoc no earlier than January 2017.

Note: For more experienced postdoctoral researchers ready to transition towards independence the next round of the [Emerging Investigator Awards for Health \(EIA\)](#) is expected to open in 2023.

I am currently working abroad, can I apply?

Yes, provided you fulfil the eligibility criteria and have the support of a HRB approved Host Institution (HI) in the Republic of Ireland, which will manage the award and where the research will be predominantly conducted if the application is successful. Please note that this call is not open for HIs from Northern Ireland.

I am from the health and care professional group and I have a faculty position (not joint with the HSE) but I would like to have more postdoctoral experience, can I apply?

Yes, if you are not engaged in clinical practice anymore and you are now an academic-based researcher. LAs such as medics, nurses and midwives, dentists, pharmacists or any other health and social care professionals who are not engaged in clinical practice and are currently in a faculty position may apply to the fellowship scheme provided they fulfil the eligibility criteria. However, the HRB will not buy any research time already protected as part of their current academic position. It is up to these LA to negotiate with their Institutions full time (i.e., through secondment) or part-time arrangements during the fellowship and any continuation of their current employment.

Can I apply part-time?

Yes, part time arrangements can be proposed for a minimum of 0.5 FTE and a maximum duration of 60 months, depending on the FTE proposed. A letter of support from your current employers will be required for part-time arrangements. This should be submitted with the application. Please note that block periods dedicated to research are not allowed.

How do I document the career break?

As part of the HRB narrative-like CV used for this scheme, the LA and mentor have the opportunity to describe any breaks from research that might have affected or influenced their progression as a researcher. This may include statutory leave, secondments, flexible work arrangements or other relevant changes (e.g., sector or discipline).

If the Lead Applicant is currently supervising other researchers, are they eligible to apply?

LAs are ineligible to apply if they are supervising Postdoctoral researchers or PhD/Clinical fellows/Masters by research who are supported through an award secured by the LA as PI. LAs are also ineligible if they acted or are acting as primary supervisor or sponsor of an early career scholarship or fellowship (e.g., PhD, postdoctoral researcher) awarded to another individual.

Supervision of researchers outside of the two criteria outlined above will not render a LA ineligible. Where an applicant has secured a relatively small award in their own name which has supported, for example, research assistants for a limited period of time this would not render them ineligible as this does not constitute them having built their own research team as PI.

I have received a peer-reviewed research grant, am I eligible to apply?

A LA is ineligible if they have received an award in Ireland or abroad targeting the career stage of transitioning towards research independence or other peer review research grants which support research staff. Fellowships, scholarships and/or peer reviewed research grants secured by the LA as PI, which do not support research staff, will not render the LA ineligible.

If I am eligible at the time of application submission but my situation changes before the final outcome will my application be withdrawn?

No. Eligibility applies to the application stage submission date only. Basically, if you are eligible at the submission date then your application is eligible for the whole process. Should your situation change after the 02 March 2023 but before the end of the ARPP 2023 review process you should let the HRB know, however, your application will not be withdrawn.

3 Mentor and Collaborators

What is the role of the mentor?

The mentor will provide support and guidance during the application process and throughout the award, if successful. It is expected that the fellow will be based at the work environment and HI as the mentor.

Who should the mentor be?

The mentor should be an established and independent investigator in a post at the Host Institution. The mentor must have evidence of:

- Expertise and a skillset in knowledge application and/or translation and/or implementation
- Experience in networking, collaborating and ideally influencing clinicians, executives, health care personnel, policy makers and/or other relevant stakeholders
- Leadership experience
- Experience in conducting research projects and programmes
- Track record in scholarly publication and communication (peer-review articles, research data publications, national or international briefing/reports, etc.)
- Coaching and mentoring.

Can the mentor be my current supervisor?

Yes, the mentor can be your current supervisor.

Is the Mentor required to approve my application before I can submit it?

Yes, the mentor must approve their participation first and also the application before submission.

Can the mentor receive payment for their role in the project?

No. The salary of the mentor cannot be bought out through this fellowship award.

Can the same mentor support more than one candidate in the ARPP 2023 call?

Yes, the same mentor can be named in different applications.

Can a Collaborator be from outside Ireland?

Yes, Collaborators from outside Ireland are welcome where the nature of the research makes this necessary.

Will the HRB pay for visits to and from Collaborators?

Yes, visits to and from Collaborators where justified may be included in the application budget under running costs.

Is a Collaborator agreement form needed?

A Collaborator agreement form must be signed by each Collaborator and uploaded with your application.

Can a Collaborator be from private enterprise?

Yes, a Collaborator may be from private enterprise. Collaborators from private enterprise are encouraged where they add value to the project for example in terms of access to expertise, technologies, and reagents. The HRB does not have the capacity to broker these arrangements. The terms of the collaboration should be determined early, and relevant agreements must be in place by the onset of the project. Consideration should be given to issues such as relative responsibilities, governance arrangements, intellectual property rights, reporting and access to data and samples.

Can a Collaborator receive payment for their role in the project?

Yes, collaborators are eligible to receive funding from the award for running costs only, when properly detailed and justified in the application. The HRB does not pay the salary of collaborators.

4 Scope

I'm not sure if my application fits with the scope of the call.

The scheme will support fellows to advance applied health and social care research projects where specific problems or evidence gaps are documented and where the project is focused on practical solutions. Research projects are welcome spanning the areas of clinical research, population health research and/or health services research.

For further guidance and details of the research areas covered can be found in page 4-5. If, after reading this, you are still unsure if your proposal is in scope for the scheme, please contact the HRB for further guidance (Sudipta Saha - ssaha@hrb.ie).

5 Funding and duration

What is the duration of the award?

The fellowship awards provide funding for three years full time or, if part-time arrangements are needed, up to five years at a minimum of 0.5 FTE.

How much can I apply for?

The fellowship will support the salary for the ARPP Fellow and research-related costs up to a maximum of €50K, which can include:

- Research running costs
- FAIR data management costs
- Small equipment costs up to €2,000
- Dissemination and knowledge exchange costs
- Training and Development allowance
- Research Experience Abroad.

How much salary can I apply for?

The maximum value is Level 2 point 10 of the most recent IUA scale. However, we would expect individuals to start on the mid-points of the level 2 scale and not above point 8 in year 1, recognising seniority as postdoctoral researcher but not yet as an independent researcher. Salary and related costs can be requested full time or pro rata.

The salary requested must be clearly and properly justified by the years of postdoctoral research experience of the LA to date and the current salary (level and point).

Does the HRB pay pension contributions?

Yes, pension provision up to a maximum of 20% of gross salary will be paid to the Host Institution to enable compliance with the Employment Control Framework (an additional 5% employee contribution is part of the salary).

Are there limits within the different budget headings in the research-related costs?

Only for equipment which is limited to €2K max. There are no other limits and the maximum value of the contribution to the research project is €50K. Proper justification for each item under each budget heading must be provided.

Should I include the overhead contribution in the budget?

No, the HRB does not pay overheads for fellowship schemes.

Can I hire a consultant (e.g., statistical support) to support the project?

Yes, this cost should be included under running costs.

Can I include costs related to data generation and/or access to secondary data?

Yes, these costs should be included under FAIR data management costs.

Can I include the costs for placement?

Yes, depending on the required justification, placement costs can be included under training and development.

6 Training and Professional Development Plan

If the Lead Applicant applies for the Travel Grant/Research Experience Abroad (REA) do they have to stay for several months abroad or can shorter trips be organised?

You can avail of the Travel Grant either by planning a longer stay abroad (usually maximum of one year) or by planning shorter visits and trips where appropriate and justified. Multiple trips in different locations can be requested depending on the nature of collaborative work, the best value for your professional development and training, and your personal circumstances. Please note that in order to avail of this opportunity, you must include this at application stage.

Does the Lead Applicant have to submit additional documentations in the application form?

Yes, in addition to providing a summary of your plan you also must provide a Gantt Chart which includes the names and timelines of the proposed training courses you propose to undertake during the fellowship. The costs must be included in the budget section only and not in the Gantt Chart. You must also provide a letter of support from the Sponsor Abroad. Additional information is in page 37- page 38 and page 42 of the Guidance Notes.

What does the funding cover?

This usually covers your travel, relocation, and accommodation costs to stay overseas. It does not cover any clinical related items, such as fees or clinical indemnity etc while you are abroad.

7 Supporting Documentation

What documents should be uploaded with my application form?

You must upload the following documents:

Mandatory documents:

- Objectives and Deliverables Gantt Chart

- Research and Professional Development Gantt Chart
- Letter of Support from the Host Institution

If applicable:

- Letter of Support to LA from current employer if applying part-time alongside other non-research academic related activities
- Project Description Support file - A maximum of 5 figures which can be a combination of images, graphs, tables, scales, instruments or surveys
- Collaboration Agreement Form(s) – required for all collaborators
- Infrastructure Agreement Form(s) – required for biobanking and access to Clinical Research Facilities.
- Letter of support from Sponsor Abroad.

8 Submission

What is the GEMS submission process?

Prior to final submission to the HRB, all applications must first be reviewed and approved within GEMS by the signatory approver at the research office (or equivalent) at the Host Institution. It is critical therefore that LA leave sufficient time in the process for the Research Office (or equivalent) in their nominated Host Institution to review, seek clarifications and approve applications prior to the final submission date and time. This may involve being aware of and complying with any internal Host Institution deadlines for review and approval, distinct from the HRB deadline.

What is the closing date for submission of Pre-applications?

All Pre-applications must be submitted to the HRB using HRB GEMS by **02 March 2023 at 13:00**.

How will I know that my application has been successfully submitted?

Once the HI endorses your application it will be automatically submitted to the HRB to be considered for funding. A grant application reference number will be assigned to the application, and you will receive a confirmation email.

I have submitted my application but have just realised I have amendments to make; can I amend the application?

No, once you have submitted your application, you cannot edit or un-submit it.