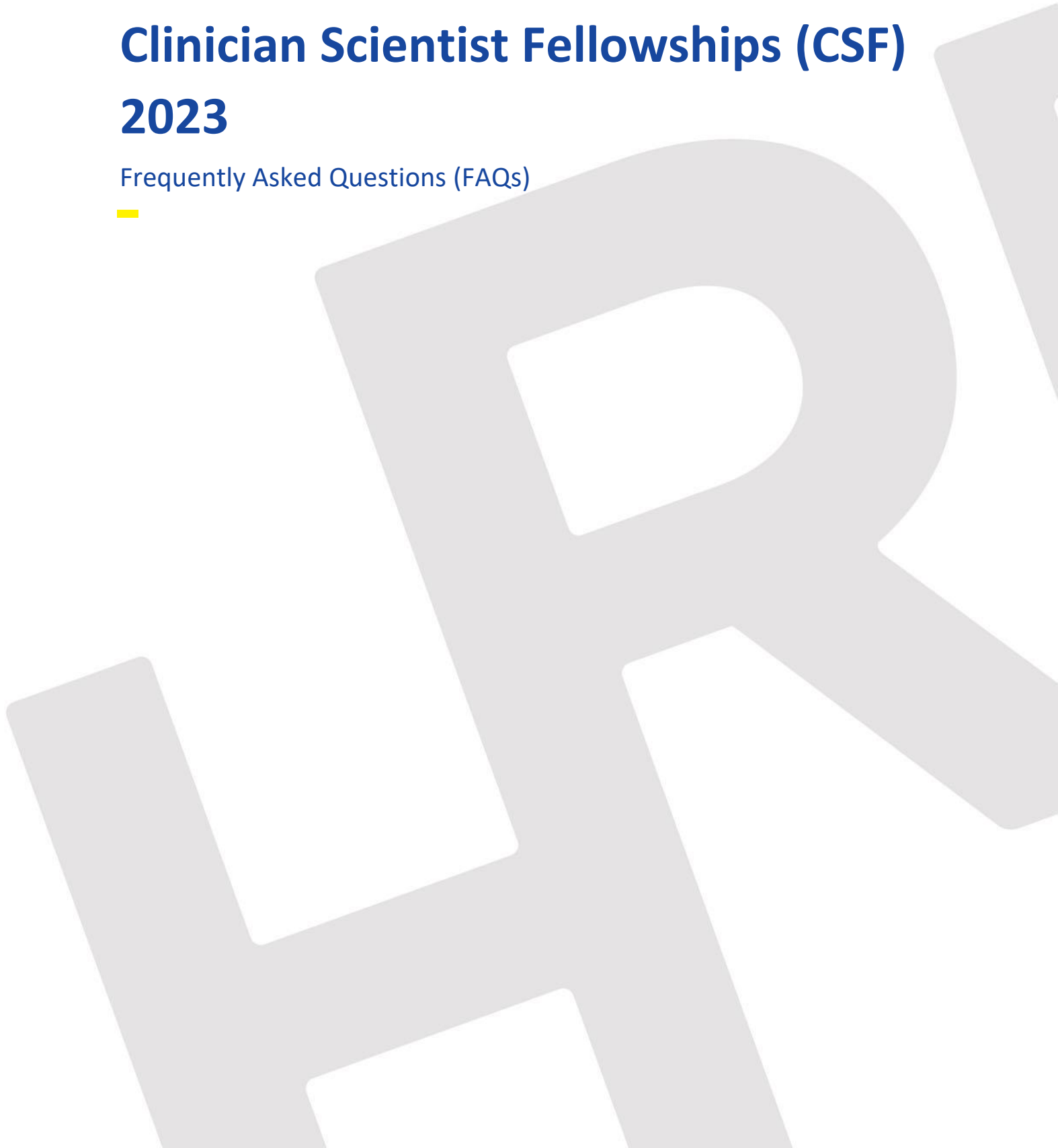


# **HRB Postdoctoral Fellowships: Clinician Scientist Fellowships (CSF) 2023**

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



# Clinician Scientist Fellowships (CSF) 2023

## Frequently Asked Questions



### Table of Contents

1	General.....	2
2	Lead Applicant/Eligibility .....	2
3	Mentor and Collaborators .....	5
4	Scope.....	7
5	Funding and duration .....	7
6	Training and Professional Development Plan.....	8
7	Supporting Documents .....	9
8	Submission.....	10

## 1 General

### How do I apply for the CSF 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 I page 18-19 of the Guidance Notes).

### Have there been any changes to the last round of the CSF 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'*<sup>1</sup>. It is now defined as at least four years 'full time' research experience post-primary degree. Full-time equivalent research experience<sup>2</sup> 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. The full-time experience does not need to be consecutive.
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%), Support (30%), and The Research project (30%)**. You can find more detail in page 15-16 of the CSF 2023 Guidance Notes.

## 2 Lead Applicant/Eligibility

### Can a Lead Applicant submit an application to both HRB postdoctoral fellowships' schemes (CSF and ARPP) to have more chance of success?

No, you can apply to only one scheme dependent on fulfilment of eligibility criteria. If you consider that you are eligible for both schemes, 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.

---

<sup>1</sup>[https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy\\_library/towards\\_a\\_european\\_framework\\_for\\_research\\_careers\\_final.pdf](https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> **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 a Lead Applicant submit more than one application for this call?**

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

**Can I apply if I was previously awarded a Clinician Scientist Fellowship?**

No. If you have previously been awarded a CSF you are not eligible to apply again. You may wish to apply for the [Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards](#) (ECSA) 2020 (Next call expected in Q4 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, LAs 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 of active postdoctoral research after the PhD?**

No, there is not.

**Is there a maximum limit of years postdoctoral research experience post PhD?**

No, there is not. However please note the HRB run the Emerging Clinician Scientist Awards (ECSA) scheme targeting health and social care practitioners who are ready to transition towards research independence. The next call for ECSA is envisaged for Q4 in 2023. Please click [here](#) for further details.

**I am currently working abroad, can I apply?**

Yes, provided you have the support of a HRB approved Host Institution (HI) in the Republic of Ireland and have already obtained or are negotiating a post in a clinical or a social care services organisation in the Republic of Ireland. Please note that this call is not open for HIs from Northern Ireland.

**What type of clinical post do Lead Applicants have to have to be eligible?**

LAs must be health and social care practitioners and have or will have at the time of the award:

- a clinical post in the Irish health service or social care organisation which covers or will cover the duration of the award if successful (e.g., SpR, hospital consultant, nurse practitioner, public health practitioner, physiotherapist)

or

- a clinical post in a private practice (e.g., General Practitioners, private physiotherapy practice, private dentist practice, private pharmacy)

or

- a post in a health and social care organisation (e.g., Tusla, Section 38 or Section 39 agencies)

or

- a joint clinical and academic teaching/education position without a research element within a Higher Education Institution and the Irish Health Services or other social care organisations.

**I am a medical doctor currently completing my SpR after which I will be eligible for a consultant post. Can I still apply even if my contract may not cover the duration of the award?**

Medical doctors applying while conducting their clinical specialty (SpR level) are eligible to apply even if the clinical contract will not cover the full duration of the award. Medical doctors who currently do not have a hospital consultant post and are trying to obtain one at the time of this application must have the endorsement of the Head of Medical School from the HI they will be applying from, and this must be provided to the HRB. **Type A contracts only** will be allowed for individuals obtaining new consultant posts.

**Can the Lead Applicant apply for full time arrangements?**

No. The LA can apply for 50% to 60% research protected time through the fellowship for a duration of 48 to 60 months. The remaining 50% to 40% should be dedicated to clinical or social care services activities. A letter of support from the current or future employer in the Republic of Ireland must be provided as part of the application.

**How do I document the career break(s)?**

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).

**I am currently type B consultant contract; can I apply to this fellowship?**

Medical doctors with a hospital consultant post should not provide private practice during the award. The HRB expects applicants who are currently on Type B consultant contracts to negotiate with their hospital group and HSE to provide a work-plan that limits private practice during the award.

**Note:** Applicants who are applying or negotiating a new consultant contract must have a type A only to be eligible to apply.

### **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 of a scholarship (e.g., PhD) 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, supervision of research assistants for a limited period of time 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 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2023 but before the end of the CSF 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 fellows will be based at the work environment and HI of the mentor.

### **Who should the mentor be?**

The mentor should be an established and independent investigator in a post at the HI. 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 CSF 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 from or to Collaborators?**

Yes, visits to or 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 a 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?**

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.

Further guidance and details of the research areas covered can be found in page 4-5. If after reading this, you are still unsure please contact the HRB for further guidance (Dr Chiara Mizzoni - [cmizzoni@hrb.ie](mailto:cmizzoni@hrb.ie)).

## **5 Funding and duration**

### **What is the duration of the award?**

The fellowship awards provide funding for four up to five years.

### **How much can I apply for?**

The fellowship will support the part-time salary for the CSF 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?**

You can apply for 0.5-0.6 FTE salary-related costs. The HRB will cover the corresponding FTE of the salary-related costs of the locum replacement for the LA in line with the appropriate professional scale. Where the LA is based in full time private clinical practice (e.g., General Practitioner), the salary may directly support the FTE of the Lead Applicant dedicated to the grant and the academic contract



offered should be in line with the HI clinical academic scale. The HRB will not buy out existing research time.

**Does the HRB pay pension contributions?**

Yes, pension provision up to a maximum of 20% of gross salary will be paid to the HI 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 heading 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.

**Are overheads included in the fellowship awards?**

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 the cost related to the data to be generated and/or to access secondary data?**

Yes, this cost should be included under FAIR data management costs.

## **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 they organise shorter trips?**

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.

**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 fees, clinical indemnity etc while you stay abroad.

### **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 37-39 of the Guidance Notes.

## **7 Supporting Documents**

### **What additional documentation do I need in support?**

LAs must provide a letter of support on headed paper from the clinical organisation where they are providing clinical care and currently employed. The letter signed by CEO/Department Manager/or other relevant person must state the support for the research protected time and part-time arrangement proposed within this application.

LAs must also provide a formal letter on headed notepaper, dated and signed by the Head of School/Research Centre/Hospital which must include the following information; [Host Institution - insert name] which is the host institution of [applicant - insert name] confirms that [applicant - insert name]: (i) holds an employment contract which extends until [insert date] or will be recognised by the host institution upon receipt of the CSF award as a contract researcher; (ii) has research space/facilities for which he/she is fully responsible for at least the duration of the award. Electronic signatures are acceptable for letters that are uploaded on the HRB GEMS system.

### **What documents should be uploaded with my application form?**

You must upload the following documents:

#### **Mandatory documents:**

- Letter of Support to Lead Applicant from the current clinical employer
- Letter of Support from the HI
- Objectives and Deliverables Gantt Chart
- Research and Professional Development Gantt Chart.

#### **If applicable**

- 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 endorsement for medical doctors applying for new consultant contracts
- 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 HI. It is critical therefore that LA leave sufficient time in the process for the Research Office (or equivalent) in their nominated HI 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 HI deadlines for review and approval, distinct from the HRB deadline.

### **What is the closing date for submission of 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 sent automatically to the HRB to be considered for funding. A grant application 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.