



INTERNATIONAL S & T COOPERATION :
POST-DOC FELLOWSHIPS TO NON-EU RESEARCHERS

Information note

Brussels, November 2007

1. Aim of the action

The stimulation of international mobility and the attraction of researchers from abroad is one of the priorities of the European Research Area.

The *Federal Science Policy* is contributing to this objective by granting post-doc fellowships to highly qualified non-EU scientists inviting them to work in a Belgian research team during a certain period of time. The ultimate aim is to establish lasting networks and S&T collaborations between the respective research teams.

2. Envisaged scientists/countries

Qualifications required to be eligible:

- holding a doctor's degree or have a similar research experience (minimum 5 years);
- being under the age limit of 51;
- having the nationality and perform research in one of the targeted countries.

The targeted countries are situated in regions with which Belgium, such as the EU, wants to strengthen the relations (i.e. in the framework of the neighbourhood policy or foreign policy) and for which not sufficient alternatives are available, namely countries from:

- Eastern Europe (**non-EU** members), Caucasia and Central Asia (New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union);
- the non-European Mediterranean Region (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey);
- Central Africa (Burundi, Congo, Rwanda) and South Africa;
- Latin America.

3. Duration of the stay : from 6 to 12 months

Exceptionally, the stays can be divided in 2 periods, subject to a preceding approval by the *Federal Science Policy Office* on the basis of a motivated request.

4. Research fields and Belgian host institutions

The considered exchanges must take place in the frame of the ongoing research activities financed by the *Federal Science Policy Office*. Consequently, at the time of application, **the Belgian host unit and promoter must be involved in the execution of a federal research programme or belong to a federal scientific institutions.**

Information regarding these programmes, the related research projects, units and promoters is available on our website <http://www.belspo.be>, rubric "FEDRA".

5. Submission of applications

The application forms are introduced to the *Federal Science Policy Office* **by the Belgian promoter** and have to be accompanied by:

- a list of scientific publications of the candidate;
- a description of the research project to be performed during the sojourn;
- a **recommendation letter from the director of the candidate's home institute** describing the added value of the mission and confirming the possibility that the fellowship holder will be able to resume his/her activities after the stay in Belgium;
- a **motivation letter from the Belgian promoter.**

Only **complete** applications will be taken into consideration.

6. Evaluation and selection

The selection will take place by an external multidisciplinary examining-board under the presidency of the *Federal Science Policy Office*.

The evaluation criteria concern:

- the scientific merits of the candidate (curriculum vitae, publications...);
- the content of the proposed research project:
 - i.e. *linkage with the ongoing activities of the host unit;
 - *relevance to the expertise of the candidate;
 - *feasibility of the study in the proposed time;
- the potential transfer of know how and prospects for further cooperation.

The selection of the candidates takes place once a year. The yearly call for proposals will be published on the website of the *Federal Science Policy Office* and communicated by letter to the Belgian institutes at least 3 months before the deadline.

The result of the selection is communicated to the concerned Belgian project leader who is responsible for the correspondence with the applicant.

The selected candidates should start their research stay not later than 15 months after the deadline of the application.

7. Budget

The fellowship comprises:

- a net monthly allowance of 1.850 EUR;
- a single payment of 900 EUR for the travel expenses from and to the native country;
- the personal liability insurance costs;
- the contribution to the National Office of Social Security (NOSS), as foreseen by the Royal Decree of 26.03.2003 in relation to foreign workers (M. B. of 28.04.2003).

Remark : The Royal Decree of 07.01.1989 foresees that fellowships to scientists are free of taxation when paid by the Belgian authorities or institutions such as universities.

Depending on the duration of the sojourns, about 30 fellowships will be granted each year for the whole of the considered countries.

The host institution will, to the account of the *Federal Science Policy Office*, be responsible for the (monthly) payments of the invited scientists as well as for the subscription of the insurances. The *Federal Science Policy Office* will reimburse the institution every three months, after having received a credit note with proofs of the expenses.

The last reimbursement will be executed only after receipt of the final activity report (cf.9).

8. Visa

The European directive, known as the "scientific visa", has now been fully transposed to Belgian law with the following consequences :

- the procedure for obtaining a visa and residence permit for any third-country researcher who has signed a **hosting agreement** with a **previously- approved research organisation** has been simplified;
- any researcher coming to Belgium in the framework of such an agreement is also **exempted from the work permit requirement**.

On the basis of this hosting agreement signed by both parties, the researcher can submit an application for a residence permit lasting longer than three months to the Belgian diplomatic or consular post in the country of origin.

Once in Belgium, the researcher should **register in the town** of his/her new residence (even if it is temporary) **within the 8 days** after arrival.

However **the host institution has to inform the appropriate authority** (the Immigration Service of the concerned Region) of the arrival of the researcher **at the latest within one month**. The institution will therefore send to that authority, besides the date of the arrival, a copy of the hosting agreement as well as a copy of the first page of the passport.

In the case of accompanying families, even for a short visit, it is advised to start the procedure at the same time as that for the fellowship holder.

Details about this "scientific visa" can be found on our website with the link

[Belgian Science Policy - VISA - Introduction](#)

9. Reports

9.1 Mid-term report

At mid-term, the fellowship holder, in concertation with the Belgian promoter(s), has to report in brief (maximum 3 pages) to the *Federal Science Policy Office* about the progress of the research activities, potential difficulties and perspectives.

9.2 Final report

At the end of the stay, a more detailed activity report (maximum 15 pages) is written. It presents a recapitulation of the research objectives and used methodologies and gives a comprehensive description of the results and conclusions. A list of publications, missions and contributions to scientific meetings has to be added.

In an **accompanying letter**, the **project leader** will point out in how far the objectives were met. He also will give an appreciation about the added value of the sojourn on the researcher, on the host unit and on the prospects for further collaboration.

Finally, a **summary of maximum 1 page** is requested, for internal use by the *Federal Science Policy Office* (website, FEDRA database,...). This text, including a few keywords, has to be sent by e-mail to swen@belspo.be .

10. Publications

Every publication or event connected with the research sojourn should mention that the concerned author is beneficiary of a fellowship granted by the Federal Science Policy Office.

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This information note as well as the application form is available on our website : <http://www.belspo.be>

Belgian Science Policy
Research & return grants
Post-doc fellowships to non-EU researchers
([Belgian Science Policy : Calls for proposals](#))

For further particulars contact

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