



Guide for Applicants [Call 1 – 2022]

Important dates

Call Opens	27 October 2021
Candidate Information Webinar	2 November 2021 12:00 UTC
Application deadline	19 January 2022, 18:00 UTC
Remote review	January / February 2022
Interviews*	March 2022
Awards*	April 2022
Anticipated employment start*	From June 2022

* These dates are indicative and subject to change

Revision History	Details / changes
1_00	Call Open - Release





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Disclaimer

This guide aims to assist potential applicants. It is provided for information purposes only and is not intended to replace consultation of any applicable legal sources. Neither RCSI, the NeuroInsight Partner Institutes, the European Commission nor the Research Executive Agency (or any person acting on their behalf) can be held responsible for the use made of this guidance document. The NeuroInsight Terms and Conditions shall prevail in case of discrepancies.



1. Purpose of this Guide for Applicants

This guide provides instructions and practical information to potential applicants to assist in preparing and submitting an application for a NeuroInsight Fellowship. In addition, it provides a general overview of the scheme and the assessment process.

Applicants should also review the Terms and Conditions document, and information published on the NeuroInsight website (www.neuroinsight.eu). The submission portal is accessed on the website.

2. The NeuroInsight Programme

2.1 About NeuroInsight

NeuroInsight is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND Action. This programme operates at the intersection between two existing large scale, distributed programmes of research in Ireland: **FutureNeuro, the SFI Centre for Chronic and Rare Neurological Disease**, and **Insight, the SFI Centre for Data Analytics**. Fellowships may be hosted by any institution in Ireland that is affiliated with one of these Centres.

NeuroInsight will fund at least 33 Postdoctoral Fellowships of 24 months, awarded over two calls for proposals. The programme aims to support the next generation of research leaders in Europe in **Advanced skills for Data Analytics in Neurological Diseases**, by facilitating high quality research while providing opportunities for fellows to develop skills and flexibility for an independent career in their field of research, in academia or industry.

Key features of our fellowship programme are:

- Fellows will benefit from a supervision and mentorship team that spans both Centres, encouraging a new, cross-disciplinary career path
- Intersectoral engagement will be integral to each Fellowship, primarily through a 3-6 month secondment to an industry or clinical setting
- Fellows will receive direction to support integration of Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in their research actions
- A comprehensive training programme including data science and clinical skills schools is planned

2.2 The SFI Centres

FutureNeuro and **Insight** are National Research Centres, bringing together expert investigators based in universities and technical institutes across Ireland to work on a common theme.



FutureNeuro is a centre of research excellence for chronic and rare neurological disease. They are multi-disciplinary, inter-institutional and working with industry, patient organisations and the health service to transform the lives of patients in Ireland and worldwide.

FutureNeuro's mission is faster diagnosis, personalised treatments and patient-centred care. They aim to change the patient journey through research informed by the needs of both patients and neurologists. This includes developing rapid and accurate tools for diagnosis, the development of therapies to correct damaged brain networks, technologies to enable patients to monitor their own health and well-being, and linking this to Ireland's national imaging, diagnostics and eHealth infrastructure.



FutureNeuro's overall vision to enable people with Neurological Diseases to live independently, through ambitious research that address the unmet needs of patients and neurologists.

Insight is a research centre, focused on the domain of data analytics. Its research community strives to use excellent science to create new knowledge in data analytics and its applications, while also delivering industry impact and economic benefit.

The largest SFI Research Centre, we bring together leading research teams from four lead universities (DCU, NUI Galway, UCC and UCD) and four associate sites (MU, RIA, TCD and Tyndall), to deliver a world-class research programme, significant industrial and economic benefit and compelling outreach and education.

At Insight we undertake high impact research in data analytics that has significant benefits for the individual, industry and society by enabling better decision making.

Insight's vision is "Empowering Citizens. Smarter Societies."



2.3 The Host Institutes

Depending on the choice of supervisor, the Fellow will be an employee of one of the following institutions for the purpose of conducting their Fellowship



For over 200 years RCSI has played a major role in medical education and training in Ireland. Founded in 1784 to train surgeons, today the College provides extensive education and training in the healthcare professions at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The RCSI Research Institute is one of Ireland's foremost research centres. RCSI is committed to performing high levels of research activity, to commercialising intellectual property arising from its research, and to developing collaborative links with industry, educational and research institutions both nationally and internationally.



DCU is a young, dynamic and ambitious university with a distinctive mission to transform lives and societies through education, research and innovation. Since admitting its first students in 1980, DCU has grown in both student numbers and size and is now a multi campus environment in Glasnevin, located just north of Dublin city. DCU is recognised nationally and internationally as a centre of academic excellence with over 16,000 students and it is regularly featured among the top young universities globally as measured by the Times Higher Education Top 100 under 50 and the QS Top 50 under 50.



As Ireland's university on the world stage, Trinity is recognised for academic excellence and a transformative student experience. The historic campus is located in the heart of Dublin city centre at the meeting place of the retail and cultural districts. With a tradition of scholarship spanning more than four centuries, Trinity is home to talented inquiring minds, a liberal education, and research conducted at the frontiers of disciplines.



University College Dublin has its origins in the mid-nineteenth century under the leadership of the renowned educationalist John Henry Cardinal Newman. Since its foundation in 1854, the University has flourished and made a unique and substantial contribution to the creation of modern Ireland, based on successful engagement with Irish society on every level and across every sphere of activity. UCD is one of Europe's leading research-intensive universities; an environment where undergraduate education, masters and PhD training, research, innovation and community engagement form a dynamic spectrum of activity.



Founded in 1845, and inspiring students for 170 years, NUI Galway has earned international recognition as a research-led university with a commitment to top quality teaching. There is a vibrant research ecosystem at the university. This dynamic community attracts researchers, academics, entrepreneurs and students of the highest calibre.



The University of Limerick (UL) is located on the west coast of Ireland along the picturesque River Shannon and enjoys an unspoiled natural environment blended with state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities. With close to 12,000 students, including more than 2,000 international students each year, UL is a young and enterprising university with a proud record of innovation in education and scholarship. With strong links to business and industry, UL excels at translational research which aims to accelerate the practical application of academic research to benefit society. UL houses some of the most innovative and successful research centres in Ireland.



UCC was established in 1845 as one of three Queen's Colleges, established in the reign of Queen Victoria, and named after her. Nowadays University College Cork (UCC) is an internationally competitive, research-led University that plays a key role in the development of Ireland's knowledge-based economy. UCC's mission is to advance excellence in teaching, research and the quality of the student experience. UCC's institutional research strategy focuses on creating and supporting world-leading clusters of researchers, building on the research strengths of the University.



Established with a mission to support industry and academia in driving research to market, Tyndall National Institute is one of Europe's leading research centres in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) research and development and the largest research facility of its type in Ireland. Established in 2004 as a successor to the National Microelectronics Research Centre (NMRC founded in 1982) at University College Cork, the Institute hosts over 460 researchers, engineers and support staff, including a full-time postgraduate cohort of 135 students.



Maynooth University is an internationally recognised institution located 25 kilometres outside of Dublin, Ireland, and is the nation's fastest growing university. One of four constituent universities of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth University in 2021 placed #88 in the global top 100 universities under 50 years old in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Today, Maynooth University is a place of lively contrasts – a modern institution, dynamic, rapidly-growing, research-led and engaged, yet grounded in historic academic strengths and scholarly traditions. Maynooth's unique collegial culture fosters an interdisciplinary approach to research, which its world-class academics bring to bear in tackling some of the most fundamental challenges facing society today.



Waterford Institute of Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LAIRGE

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) is a university-level institution in the South-East of Ireland with over 10,000 students and 1,000 staff. WIT is the major provider of higher education in the South East region of Ireland and one of the largest IOT's in Ireland. The Institute's range and scope reflect the changing needs of the southeast as well as the country as a whole. Over the past 10 years, the Institute has successfully attracted over €139m in research funding from various sources, including three Enterprise Ireland (EI) funded Technology Gateway Centres in the areas of applied materials research, telecommunications research, and pharmaceutical and biotechnology research.



2.4 About Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

Internationally respected in industry and academia, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship is a recognised mark of research excellence. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), named after the double Nobel Prize winning Polish-French scientist famed for her work on radioactivity, and aim to support researchers at all stages of their careers irrespective of nationality. Researchers working across all disciplines, from life-saving healthcare to 'blue-sky' science, are eligible for funding, typically through fixed-term fellowships.

Mobility, training and personal development are key factors in any MSCA scheme. Therefore, the actions also support industry doctorates, combining academic research study with work in companies, and often include innovative training that enhances employability and career development.

What are the long-term benefits of a MSCA Fellowship?

- MSCA Fellows' publications are more-often cited than equivalent peers, and are more frequently published on influential scientific journals.
- MSCA fellows are more successful in applying for European Research Council (ERC)'s competitive grants for high quality research.
- MSCA Fellows achieve professorship titles more frequently than others, and are more likely to hold principal investigator position.

For further information see the links in Section 7.

NeuroInsight as a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action

NeuroInsight is an MSCA-COFUND Action. This means that NeuroInsight fellowships are part-funded by the European Commission, and part by the SFI FutureNeuro and Insight Centres. Fellows benefit from the prestige and long-term benefits of holding a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship. The disciplinary field of the programme is focused on the NeuroInsight thematic areas (see section 3), for which the host institutes have excellent infrastructure and capability to support research projects.

In contrast to the MSCA Individual Fellowship schemes, where the candidate is required to propose and execute their own training and development programme alongside their main research activity, in NeuroInsight this support will be designed, facilitated and monitored by the NeuroInsight Team. Fellows will benefit from training as a cohort, forming a network of peers across Ireland.

2.5 Working in Ireland

Why choose Ireland?

Ireland is a small English-speaking, technologically-advanced country (population under 5 million), home to leading multinational and indigenous companies, with a young, growing population. It is in the top centile of Eurostat rankings for Innovation Output.

Ireland is building a reputation as a world leader in scientific research capability, continuously climbing the international citation and innovation rankings to a position of 10th place globally for overall scientific research quality. Ireland ranks in the top 5 in key disciplines such as Nanotechnology (1st), Animal and Dairy Science (2nd), Chemistry, Immunology, Materials Sciences, Agricultural Sciences (3rd in all) and Mathematics (4th).

Ireland provides an ideal location for researchers to access Horizon Europe programmes, European Research Council grants and international funding from charities and industry. Science Foundation Ireland works in



partnership with many organisations including the Royal Society, the BBSRC, the US National Science Foundation, NIH, and the National Natural Science Foundation of China.

Many of the world's biggest and best companies have located strategic research facilities here, and multinationals often choose Irish locations to base their European, Middle Eastern and African (EMEA) operations. The driving factors are typically economic, but companies frequently cite access to world class innovation, alongside the flexibility and adaptability of the population, as reasons to stay and expand. In Irish research and innovation, you will find a friendly ecosystem that sees academic researchers working hand-in-hand with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as large companies, and funding agencies extremely willing to support them.

Please visit <http://www.iua.ie/international> for more information on relocating to Ireland as a researcher.

Visas & Work Permits

You must personally review all information on visas and work permits to ensure you can work in Ireland before applying. The visa requirement depends on your nationality, or the country that issued your main travel document. You can check requirements here:

www.irishimmigration.ie/coming-to-work-in-ireland/working-in-ireland-travel-path/

To enter employment in Ireland, if you are a citizen of an EU/EEA (European Economic Area) nation, except for Bulgaria and Romania, or a Swiss national, you do not require a permit.

Otherwise, the eligibility requirements and contractual terms of the NeuroInsight programme are designed to fulfil the conditions of the 'Hosting Agreement Scheme'. This special scheme for non-EU researchers offers a free and fast track service for permission to work. With a Hosting Agreement, researcher's families can accompany them, have access to public services including schools, and are entitled to seek work themselves.

For full information on the Hosting Agreement Scheme, visit:

www.euraxess.ie/ireland/fast-track-work-permit-non-eu-rd-hosting-agreement-scheme

Living in Ireland

Ireland is renowned for its friendly citizens and warm welcomes and has previously been voted the 'World's friendliest country' by Lonely Planet. As an English-speaking European nation, it is often seen as a gateway to Europe by the rest of the world. Today, Ireland is a dynamic, lively, modern country with a young population and a successful, technologically orientated economy. Ireland also remains a country with deep heritage, where tradition, culture, music and conversation are valued.

For more information about coming to Ireland live and work including healthcare, welfare, accommodation, climate and other practicalities see:

www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/moving_to_ireland/coming_to_live_in_ireland/
www.livinginireland.ie

3. About the Fellowships

NeuroInsight Fellowships are for experienced researchers of any nationality, seeking a prestigious career developing position in one of Ireland's third-level institutes. NeuroInsight aims to develop research, technical and other skills, including the ability to actively interact, collaborate and engage with industry. NeuroInsight



Fellows will be researchers who are technically strong in their own discipline, and capable of performing high-value, interdisciplinary research.

Two main types of Fellowships are offered, defined by their mobility format:





Incoming Fellowships	The Fellow will relocate from anywhere in the world to Ireland, to conduct their project at a NeuroInsight host institute, for the duration of the fellowship
Global Fellowships	The Fellow will begin their Fellowship by relocating to a host organisation outside of Ireland (outgoing host) for 12 months, before returning to their NeuroInsight host (primary host) for the remainder of the fellowship

Mobility and relocation are fully defined by the eligibility rules (Section 4).

NeuroInsight welcomes applications from candidates who have had career breaks and are looking to return to a research-based career and from candidates who have had a non-traditional career path, including those who have built up research experience but who may not have gained a doctoral qualification. Specific eligibility criteria apply for these situations.

Research Themes

NeuroInsight Fellowships must be aligned to one of four research challenges:

	Ethnographics	How data from those with neurological disease are collected and shared for the development of precision medicine, including methods to capture such data
	Advanced Analytics	Using patient data to predict important clinical events including response to therapies
	Genomics	The analysis of 'omic data from human and animal models to inform diagnosis and therapeutics
	Patient Impact	Using insights from data to inform more effective and targeted healthcare provision

Domains of expertise have been further subdivided to help candidates identify a suitable supervisor match, and to facilitate the review process:

Diagnostics	Applying sequencing and/or advanced informatics and/or nanomaterials technology to discover, detect and interpret biomolecules from patients collected via national clinical networks to deliver faster, more accurate diagnosis	Machine Learning and Deep Learning	Computer systems that are able to learn and adapt without following explicit instructions, by using algorithms and statistical models to analyse and draw inferences from patterns in data, including 'deep' systems that use layered neural networks to imitate the human brain
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Therapeutics	Exploring new types of therapies, including molecules that work by controlling the activity of networks of genes to stabilize or recover brain function to see how we could deliver these to the brain	Decision Making	Managing increasing volumes of data and incrementally incorporating new data into decision making processes, exploiting virtualized and reconfigurable networks, and scaling the decision support to the most appropriate selection of data
eHealth	Provide insight to research-adapted continuously learning and innovative healthcare system through careful design, development and implementation of eHealth technologies	Multimodal Data Analysis	Use of multi-modal data (imaging, video, audio along with traditional datasets) for complex data analytics across data sources ,and interpretation of complex data types
Genomics, bioinformatics and computational biology	Development of expertise and capacity in DNA and RNA sequencing, bioinformatics and systems biology	Data Engineering and Governance	The complex task of making large volumes of raw data usable to those who might benefit from its inherent value; making data accessible, interoperable, secure and robust, and providing predictive models and finding trends
Predclinical disease phenotyping	Modelling neurological diseases - in vitro cellular, iPSC, and in vivo-whole animal - developing capacity in genetic and pharmacologic functional screening and molecular-cellular-animal imaging	Augmented Human	The integration of the human (through our personal data) into an infrastructure that offers an opportunity of performance enhancements in personal sensing, connected health, data analytics for health, recommender systems, semantic theories and others
Clinical research and trials infrastructure	Enabling advanced clinical infrastructure, including health registers for neurological disease (e.g. epilepsy, ALS etc), as well as the collections of patient DNA and biofluids.	Smart Enterprise for Health	Enable healthcare enterprise to have a deeper, more detailed and more dynamic understanding of itself, its offerings and its patients/customers by mining, interpreting and integrating enterprise data repositories and streams, customer data sources and relevant and contextual open (publicly available) data, in order to make better augmented decisions or recommendations

Applicants can freely select their theme, and identify a primary supervisor and linked subtopic(s) for their proposal. A full directory of supervisors appears on the website (or may be requested from the programme manager).

Supervision Team

Along with the primary NeuroInsight supervisor, each fellow will have:

- i) a co-supervisor or mentor (academic or other) to provide research and/or career advice
- ii) an inter-sectoral supervisor, from industry/patient group/clinical setting



It is anticipated that the co-supervisor/mentor will also be a NeuroInsight supervisor, but not from the same Centre as the primary supervisor, and the intersectoral supervisor will be defined by the proposed secondment. However, other supervision teams may be proposed, with justification.

Where possible, applicants are encouraged to identify the complete supervision team at application stage. If not, the team will be defined prior to a fellowship start with the help of the NeuroInsight managers.

Training & Development

The NeuroInsight programme is designed as a **full research training and career development programme**, with a series of training and career development activities and opportunities. Fellows will be helped to build their network towards their individual career goals, and given guidance on making the most of training opportunities at their host institute and externally.

Each Fellow will discuss and define a Personal Career Development Plan (PCDP) with their supervision team in their first two months. Along with the research and technical objectives of their fellowship, the PCDP will also indicate a clear set of training and development goals, career targets, industry, PPI and publication strategies as appropriate to their project.

Intersectoral Engagement and Secondments

Working with industry, clinical partners and patient groups to inform, steer and create impact from research is an important feature of the SFI Centre environment in which NeuroInsight fellows will operate.

FutureNeuro and Insight have well-established links with major multinationals, commercial SMEs, pre-commercial start-ups, hospitals and clinical practices and public-patient organisations. Many supervisors operate a portfolio of exciting collaborations. The NeuroInsight training programme, and regular formal and informal events will provide each Fellow with a further opportunity to interact with our industry and clinical networks.

As well as this continuous exposure, NeuroInsight Fellows are expected to undertake an intersectoral secondment of 3 - 6 months duration with a non-academic partner, anywhere in the world, that suits their research, training and development needs. Applicants should discuss potential relevant and realistic secondments with their supervisor and include them in their research proposal, but do not need to provide firm commitments at this stage. Once a Fellowship is awarded, the NeuroInsight team will support the Fellow in further defining, negotiating and agreeing their secondment period.

For Global Fellowships, where the host of the outgoing phase is an academic organisation, an intersectoral secondment should be proposed during the return phase.

Public and Patient Involvement (PPI)

Public Patient Involvement (PPI) as the development of active partnerships between researchers, patients and public stakeholders to develop research which is relevant and useful to patient and public needs.

- By 'patients' we mean people living with or caring for people with neurological conditions including past and current health care service users, formal carers, and informal carers such as parents and family members.
- By 'public' we mean people who have a specific interest in neurological health, such as patient support groups, charities for neurological conditions, healthcare providers and policy makers.

Applicants are expected to embed PPI in their Fellowship. High level strategies should be included in your initial proposal, with reference to the links provided in Section 7. Additional measures may be incorporated later



through a combination of feedback from our NeuroInsight PPI Panel (involving Epilepsy Ireland and Neurological Alliance of Ireland), and by participating in a Patient Dragon's Den, organised by the Irish Platform for Patient Organisations, Science and Industry (IPPOSI).

The Den will be offered as an optional service to applicants prior to the interview phase, i.e. for those selected following the remote review. Applicants may 'pitch' their proposal concept to a group of patients and carers, experienced with healthcare and research. 'Patient Dragons' will offer their advice and input to any aspect of the proposed project at conceptualisation stage/prior to application, in a virtual setting. For successful applicants, a similar event will take place during project implementation.

Additional Training

Fellows are encouraged to supplement the NeuroInsight activities with individual training relevant to their research projects and career goals. All host institutes have staff development programmes, with technical and non-technical courses available in specific and transferrable skills. Funding will be available to Fellows to pursue training outside of these programmes.

4. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants are strongly encouraged to raise any eligibility concerns and queries with the NeuroInsight programme manager before starting to develop an application.

4.1 Applicant Eligibility

Universal Criteria

- Applicants must be Experienced Researchers at the call deadline
- Applicants must be fluent in English (written and spoken)

Definitions:

- "Experienced Researcher" is an individual in possession of a doctoral degree (i.e. have successfully completed all the formal requirements to obtain a doctorate) or, if the applicant has does not have a doctoral degree, they should have at least 4 years of full-time equivalent research experience.
- "Full-Time Equivalent Research Experience" is measured from the date when a researcher obtained a degree that would allow them to pursue a PhD, and is defined as the full-time duration of being active in research
- 'Active in research' means being employed or holding a scholarship in research. Parental leave 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, purely teaching positions or honorary association to a university will not be counted as being active in research.
- 'Fluent in English' means minimum standard (or native):
 - TOEFL: 237 (computer-based), 580 (paper-based test)
 - Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CAP): Overall score of 180 with a minimum of 169 in all components.
 - Evidence may be requested by the NeuroInsight team
 - Other English language examinations of equivalence will also be considered

Mobility Criteria:



Fellowship Type		Additional criteria on eligibility	Mobility Rule
Incoming	Standard		Applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Ireland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the call deadline
	‘Career Restart’	The applicant has undertaken a career break in research (i.e. was not ‘active in research’ for at least 12 months within the 18 months immediately prior to the call deadline)	Applicants may not have resided or carried out their main activity in Ireland for more than 3 years in the 5 years immediately prior to the call deadline
	‘Career Reintegration’	The applicant is a national or long-term resident of an EU Member State or Associated Country, and is moving / has moved from a Third Country directly to the Republic of Ireland	
Global		The applicant must be a national or long-term resident of an EU Member State or Associated Country	The applicant must move or have moved from any country to the outgoing partner organisation, and may not have resided or carried out their main activity in the country of the outgoing partner organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years prior to the call deadline

Definitions and exceptions:

- Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays can be ignored
- For refugees covered by the 1951 Refugee Convention (Geneva Convention), the refugee procedure (i.e. before refugee status is conferred) will not be counted as ‘period of residence/activity in the country of the beneficiary’. This is regardless of whether he/she was active in research at that time.
- ‘Associated Countries’ are as defined by the Horizon 2020 programme¹

4.2 Application Eligibility

- The research proposed by the applicant should be aligned with one or more of the NeuroInsight research themes
- Applicants must name a primary academic supervisor from the available NeuroInsight directory that has been contacted and agreed to support the proposal
- Applications must be complete and submitted before the call deadline
- The research proposed must adhere to NeuroInsight ethical standards (section)
- For Global Fellowships, applicants must provide letters of commitment from the host of each phase (i.e. a letter from the outgoing phase host, and one from the Research Office of the primary Irish host); applicants considering Global Fellowships are strongly encouraged to contact the NeuroInsight programme manager to facilitate obtaining these letters

¹https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/3cpart/h2020-hi-list-ac_en.pdf



Only one application per applicant may be submitted per call, resubmissions for the second call from unsuccessful applicants are encouraged.

5. How to Apply

Applicants for the NeuroInsight Fellowships will submit a research proposal, CV and a self-assessment of eligibility. Once eligibility is confirmed, an international, independent panel of experts will review the submission. Top ranked submissions will pass to the next stage, where candidate Fellows will be invited for interview. Those successful at the interview stage will be informed of the award, and the subsequent intent to offer a Fellowship position at one of the NeuroInsight host institutes.

The actual start of the fellowship will occur after an employment contract is issued by the institution and accepted by the Fellow, and any visa / permission to work processes completed. Fellowships will ideally start within 3 months of award; delayed starts may be considered with justification.

5.1 Overview of the Application and Selection Process

Publication of the Fellowship Call

The application process starts with the publication of the NeuroInsight Call, along with this document and associated templates. An online application portal (accessed via the NeuroInsight website) is open for the duration of call. At any stage, applicants may contact the NeuroInsight management team (neuroinsight@rcsi.ie) for support.

Preparation for Applying

Applicants are encouraged to start preparation as early as possible. Please review all relevant documentation, including this Guide, FAQs and Application Templates published on the NeuroInsight webpage and application portal.

Applicants must contact the NeuroInsight Supervisor with whom they would like to work with on their research project should they be successful. A directory of supervisors can be found on the website. The Supervisor will confirm whether they are happy to work with the applicant on their chosen topic, and may offer guidance on developing the research plan.

For Global Fellowships, the applicant is strongly advised to contact the NeuroInsight programme manager as early as possible to discuss practical considerations for the outgoing phase, and the requirements for commitment from both hosts.

Developing and submitting your proposal

Applicants are required to propose a research project that can be executed over the duration of a two-year fellowship, with the support of the chosen supervisor. The plan should also describe how the fellowship will develop the applicant's career.

The submission will comprise a written research proposal, your CV and supporting information. Please review the detailed requirements in Appendix I and II, along with the criteria that will be used to evaluate your proposal in Appendix III. Document templates are provided.

Eligibility Check

After the call closes, all applications will first be checked for completeness and eligibility. Applicants will be informed of the result by email. If an application is found ineligible, the reason will be stated and the submission



rejected. Note that documentary evidence of eligibility will only be requested should the application be reviewed successfully and selected for award.

International Expert Review and Ranking

All eligible applications will undergo independent, international remote review. Each proposal will be evaluated by a minimum of three experts. Applications will be scored and ranked according to the NeuroInsight Assessment Criteria (Appendix III). At the end of the stage, applicants will receive a summary of their score and feedback, and the decision on their progression to interview.

Interviews of Top-Ranking Applicants

The set of top-ranked applicants will be invited for an interview lasting 40 minutes. At the interview, the applicant will be invited to give a brief 10-minute presentation on their research proposal. The presentation should include an overview of the research plan, the motivation of the applicant to take up the Fellowship, and details of specific career and training objectives. The presentation will be followed by questions from the interview panel.

The interview is a time for the candidates to discuss the research proposal and demonstrate that they have the desire and competency required for its execution. It will also give the candidates an opportunity to further explore their research concept and plan, and to learn more about the NeuroInsight environment. The interview may be attended via teleconferencing facility or in person. There is no advantage to attending in person, as we expect applications from all over the world. In the case of COVID-19 restrictions continuing, videoconference may be the only option offered. Travel costs will not be reimbursed.

Candidates will then be informed of their evaluation, panel feedback and the award decision.

The Award and Offers of Employment

The final score for each application will be comprised of the score for the written proposal and the interview, with equal weighting applied. Starting from the top ranked submission and working downwards, the NeuroInsight Steering Committee will approve funding of awardees, considering the maximum number of fellowships available over the two calls. Those who score above the threshold but not approved for funding immediately may be placed in a reserve list at the discretion of the steering committee.

Upon selection, successful applicants will be informed of the award decision, and to anticipate an employment offer from their host institute. Prior to the institution giving a firm offer (an employment contract to execute the Fellowship), NeuroInsight management and/or the host institute may contact the applicant's referees, and request further documentary evidence to verify applicant eligibility. Should these checks fail, the award may be withdrawn.

It is expected that awardees will start their Fellowship at the earliest convenience, and within three months of contract offer from their host institute. Given that mobility is a key feature of the programme, NeuroInsight recognises that additional time may be required to allow a Fellow to complete their previous activities before the move to Ireland, and obtain visas if required. Requests for delayed start will be considered on a case-by-case basis.



Ethics Review

An additional, parallel review will take place if the applicant answers 'yes' to any of the questions in the ethics self-assessment (see Appendix IV), and subsequently provides an Ethics Statement.

The intent of the ethics review is to help applicants to understand and manage ethical issues. The review may find that the applicant has necessary controls and measures in their plan, or may request additional measures. In extreme cases the proposal may be declared ineligible. The Ethical Review Committee may ask for additional information before coming to a decision.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the review, including requirements, recommendations and advice. If stipulated, formal ethical approval for the project must be obtained by the applicant from relevant ethics committee(s) prior to the start of the project.

Appeals process

Applicants who believe that their proposal has been unjustly evaluated may submit an appeal. Appeals can be made with regards to evaluation procedures that were followed and/or to the application of the evaluation criteria. Appeals that relate to the scientific judgement of reviewers will not be taken into consideration. Applicants must submit their appeal within 30 days of being notified of their evaluation outcomes (eligibility review, remote review, interview/selection).

An appeal template will be available on the NeuroInsight website for this purpose, to be emailed directly to the NeuroInsight Programme Manager. An Appeals Committee will review the submission, and applicants will be informed by e-mail within 30 days if their appeal is accepted, and actions that will be implemented, which may include repeat of part or all the review process. Appeals Committee decisions are final.

6. Employment as an NeuroInsight Fellow

6.1 Contracts

NeuroInsight Fellows will be offered fixed-term or specific purpose Research Fellow employment contracts from the host institution of their Supervisor for the duration of the fellowship. The terms of the employment contract will be in line with the Terms of Employment (Information) Acts 1994–2014, Ireland, which ensures provision of pensions, vacation / maternity / parental and carers leave, accident insurance cover and access to healthcare.

The Fellow may be required to sign additional agreements (non-disclosure, safety documentation etc.) due to their interaction with an industry or other academic partner, in a secondment, outgoing phase or otherwise.

In addition to standard terms and conditions, employment contracts will specify the following:

- The nature of the appointment of the researcher / status (i.e. Research Fellow)
- The maximum duration of the Fellowship
- Details of the name(s) of the Supervisor(s) with overall responsibility for the project
- The gross salary provided for the Fellow, including the mobility and family allowances if applicable
- Working hours, vacation and other leave entitlements, such as sickness and maternity leave
- Arrangements between the institute and the researcher relating to IP rights, confidentiality and any other policies of the institute



6.2 Financial Aspects

The total award, following the MSCA model, is a fixed amount (fully specified in the programme Terms and Conditions), and subject to statutory employment deductions which may vary by host institute. It is our wish in this guide to provide you with greater guidance on the actual gross salary that may be derived from this award.

The indicative allowances that a Fellow will receive as gross salary for the Fellowship are listed in the table below for **guidance only**.

	Living & mobility allowances*	Family allowance**
NeuroInsight Fellowship Gross Salary (EUR)	42 700 – 48 600	5 400

The mobility and family allowances are constituent of the Fellow's salary in addition to the living allowance, and are provided to compensate for the cost of the required personal and household relocation of the Fellow and their dependents. Please note that all or part of these allowances received by the Fellow will be liable for normal taxes and other deductions (see www.revenue.ie), which will be applied by the host institute and detailed on the Fellow's monthly payslip.

In addition, the NeuroInsight Fellowship provides contributions:

- Towards the cost of conducting the research plan (i.e. consumables, publications, travel etc);
 - €800 per month of the Fellowship completed, up to a maximum of €19 200 over the two years, for Fellows affiliated to the FutureNeuro Centre
 - €300 per month of the Fellowship completed, up to a maximum of €7 200 over the two years, for Fellows affiliated to the Insight Centre
- Up to €1500 per Fellow towards individual training costs over the 2 years, awarded by request/approval from the NeuroInsight management

These funds will be placed in a research account at the host institute, and may be used according to the Host Institute's procurement policies, under the authorisation of the Fellow's supervisor

Programme-wide management, training and development activities are all provided by NeuroInsight.

** All fellows who are eligible to apply for the programme are eligible for the mobility allowance*

*** Fellows with dependent family at the call deadline, or acquiring dependents during their fellowship, will become eligible for the family allowance. Family is defined as persons linked to the Fellow by (i) marriage, or (ii) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country where this relationship was formalised; or (iii) dependent children who are actually being maintained by the Fellow.*

6.3 Other benefits

Fellows will receive all the necessary management and technical support to ensure access to the facilities required to carry out their research. Each host institute has administrative and welfare structures in place for the Fellows, such as an accommodation advice, IT support and health services.

NeuroInsight will be able to avail of flexible working hours and flexible working conditions. While each Fellow will have workspace in their host institution, they may also work from other locations in Ireland (or in the case of Global Fellowships, in their outgoing phase country), including home, as it suits their research, with the consent of their Supervisor.



Fellows will be given induction training in their host institutions, including IT security, data protection and health and safety appropriate to their role. This will give Fellows information on their rights as employees, employee services and a practical guide to living in Ireland, including tax-incentive travel schemes such as the Annual Travel Pass and Bike to Work.

7. Relevant Links

Guidance for writing MSCA “Individual Fellowship” Proposals	https://www.net4mobilityplus.eu/scientific-community/ https://www.iaa.ie/for-researchers/marie-sklodowska-curie-actions/resources-events-training/
European Charter for Researchers	https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/european-charter
Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers	https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/code
H2020: How to complete your ethics self-assessment	https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/ethics/h2020_hi_ethics-self-assess_en.pdf
European Textbook on Ethics in Research	https://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/textbook-on-ethics-report_en.pdf
Toolkit “Gender in EU-funded research”	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c17a4eba-49ab-40f1-bb7b-bb6faaf8dec8
Understanding gender dimension for MSCA projects	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hq4eWo30RfY (8.06min)
Marie Curie researchers and their long-term career development: A comparative study (2014)	http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/pdf/mca/marie_curie_researchers_and_their_long-term_career_development.pdf
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – Collection of EC Videos	https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/event/59959
Health Service Executive Ireland’s National Framework for the Governance, Management and Support of Health Research (RGMS Framework)	http://hseresearch.ie/governance-framework/
PPI-IGNITE – Irish national initiative on Patient and Public Involvement	https://twitter.com/ppi_ignite_net (website coming soon)
INVOLVE PPI – PPI (Patient and Public Involvement) resources (collated for applicants to NIHR [UK] research programmes	https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/ppi-patient-and-public-involvement-resources-for-applicants-to-nihr-research-programmes/23437



8. Contact Details

Email	neuroinsight@rcsi.ie
Address	RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences 123 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2 Ireland
Website	www.neuroinsight.eu
Twitter	@NeuroInsightEU



Appendix I: Proposal Submission

Applications must be submitted via the NeuroInsight online application system:

<https://neuroinsightmsca.grantplatform.com/>

To submit an application, applicants register to create an individual login. Following registration, you can begin your application, save and submit it. You may return to edit it at any time before the call deadline.

The Programme Manager may remove potential sources of bias by editing your submission documents prior to evaluation, in the best effort to present only the research concept and your capacity to enact it. To limit edits made on your behalf, it is recommended to avoid using terms that disclose gender, age or nationality.

The elements of the application process are:

Tab	Element(s)	Details	Limits
Start Here	Fellowship type	Select Incoming or Global For Incoming, indicate if you are applying under the Standard, Career Restart or Reintegration options	
Applicant Information	Personal Details	Your details as the applicant, including your nationality and gender. These are used for statistics only to help improve future calls; they are not part of the review.	
	Source	Identify where you heard about the programme	
Project Description	Title	The title of the research proposal	No limit
	Short name	A short name identifier	1 word
	Abstract	An overview of your research proposal. This abstract is not assessed, but it will be viewed by experts before they evaluate your proposal so they can confirm they are capable of providing a review. It will also be published if your proposal is successful. Therefore it should contain only non-confidential information, and include an unambiguous description of your research proposal's concept.	2000 character
	Supervisor Selection	Select the nominated NeuroInsight Supervisor	1 selection
	Theme Selection	Select the main research domain from the list given	1 topic
	Subtopic Selection	Select the appropriate expertise / application areas from the list	
	Keywords	Enter keywords that may assist expert reviewer assignment	5 words max
Ethics Self Assessment	Questionnaire	Answer all questions. If you respond 'yes' to any question, you are required to include an ethics statement to the document uploads.	
Eligibility Self Assessment	Questionnaire	Answer all questions. Documentary evidence will be required if you are successful in the selection process, prior to contract offer. If applicable, a request for career breaks to be taken into account and provision of evidence.	
Upload Proposal Documents	Document uploads	Upload: - The research proposal. Use the Research Proposal template provided, which contains instructions for	Min. 11pt font, 2cm border. Tables & footnotes at least 10pt & 8pt resp.



		structure, and content. 10 pages max. See notes in Annex II. - Your CV; template provided, 5 pages max Your ethics statement (if required) 2 pages max	5Mb document size
Letters of Support	Document Uploads	(Only appears for Global Fellowship Applications) Upload: - A letter of support from your outgoing host, confirming arrangements for the first 12 months of the fellowship - A letter of support from your return/primary host, confirming they will be the main host of your fellowship and will arrange the outgoing phase	
Declarations	Checkbox	Assert your agreement with the programme terms, and that you are acting in accordance with general research integrity best practice	

Appendix II: The Research Proposal Document

The research proposal is the most important part of the application, and will be submitted as a written document of no more than 10 pages (page count does not include the title page or Gantt chart).

A template is provided on the NeuroInsight website.

The research proposal must contain three sections: EXCELLENCE, IMPACT and IMPLEMENTATION. Notes on the expected content of each section are given the template application form. As you develop your proposal, you should also refer to the evaluation criteria in Appendix III.

Please abide by the following formatting rules:

- All text must be readable (11pt or greater, single line spacing; 10pt may be used in tables)
- References should be in footnotes, in 8 or 9pt font. All references count towards the page limit.
- Diagrams, plots and tables may be used; however, use of colour to indicate differences should be avoided in case the document is viewed in black and white

Appendix III: Evaluation Criteria

Remote Review

All eligible applications will be evaluated by three independent reviewers and will be given a score from 0 (very poor; fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed owing to missing or incomplete information) to 5 (outstanding in all criteria) for each category heading (Excellence, Impact and Implementation), considering the sub-criteria outlined in the table below.

For each category, the reviewers will determine a consensus score. Category weightings will be applied to generate an overall score, given to one decimal place. Proposals will then be ranked for selection. In cases where proposals have equal scores ("ex aequo"), they will be ordered on the priority listed at the end of the table. An overall threshold of 70% will be applicable to the overall score, i.e. a score of 3.5/5 must be obtained to have the possibility to proceed to the next stage of evaluation.

All applicants will be informed of their score and summary reviewer comments on their proposal.



Excellence	Impact	Implementation
Sub-criteria		
Quality and credibility of the research/innovation project; level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects	Enhancing the future career prospects of the researcher after the fellowship	Overall coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
Intersectoral aspects of the research (academic, industry, societal)	Potential of the Fellow to take up leading positions in academia, healthcare and/or industry in Ireland or EU	Competence, experience and complementarity of the participating organisations with respect to the research/innovation project
Quality and appropriateness of proposed individual training elements and of the two way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host environment	Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results	Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including quality management and risk management
Appropriateness of the supervision and of the integration in the team / institution / Centre	Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences	Appropriateness of the Centre / institutional environment (infrastructure). Global Fellowships: partner organisation for the outgoing phase is also evaluated.
Potential of the researcher to reach or re-enforce professional maturity/independence during the fellowship		
Criterion Weighting		
50%	30%	20%
Priority in case of ex aequo		
1	2	3

Interview

The interview panel will include as a minimum the FutureNeuro or Insight director (or their nominee), a senior expert in the submission theme, and an independent, international member.

The interview panel shall agree (consensus) on a score between 0 (very poor; superficial addressing of criteria) and 5 (excellent in all criteria) and with one decimal point, under three category headings detailed below. A weighted overall score will be determined.

Criteria		
Quality of the presentation content and delivery including general communication skills	Ability of the candidate to respond to questions, including those in the from the remote review report	Candidate's motivation and match between the applicant, supervisor and host environment
Criterion Weighting		
10%	50%	40%
Priority in case of ex aequo		
1	2	3



Overall score calculation

The two scoring evaluation phases have equal weighting. Therefore the score for the final ranking will be determined by adding the peer review and interview scoring.

Appendix IV: Ethics

The NeuroInsight Programme is committed to ensure that all research is conducted according to best ethical practice and thus maintain the good name of research in Ireland and Europe.

Applicants must always consider and address any of the following ethics issues, if they arise, in their proposals. Definitions are provided in the Horizon guides (see Section 7).

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ◦ Humans | ◦ Third countries |
| ◦ Human cells/tissues | ◦ Environment & Health and Safety |
| ◦ Personal data | ◦ Dual use |
| ◦ Animals | ◦ Misuse |

Research areas excluded from funding include:

- research activities aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes
- 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, which may be financed)
- 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

Research activities involving human embryonic stem cells (hESCs) require an additional level of approval from the Research Executive Agency funding this programme. If your concept involves use of hESCs we strongly recommend contacting the programme manager in advance of submitting a proposal.

All applicants to the NeuroInsight Fellowship Programme are required to complete an Ethics Self-Assessment, which is part of the online application form. Should the self-assessment indicate potential ethical issues, a statement describing how they will be addressed should be provided, using the template provided.



Appendix V: Country Correction Coefficients

For the global fellowships only, on the outgoing phase the living allowance will be adjusted by the following 'CCC' factor. These factors are based on the Horizon Europe Work Programme, determined relative to the Irish CCC, with a minimum threshold (83%) applied. If your target country is not listed please contact the NeuroInsight programme manager.

EU Member States		Third Countries									
AT	89.0%	AE	83.0%	CO	83.0%	IS	109.2%	MY	83.0%	SV	83.0%
BE	83.7%	AL	83.0%	CR	83.0%	JM	83.0%	MZ	83.0%	SZ	83.0%
BG	83.0%	AM	83.0%	CU	83.0%	JO	83.0%	NA	83.0%	TD	83.8%
CY	83.0%	AO	108.8%	CV	83.0%	JP	86.4%	NC	89.9%	TG	83.0%
CZ	83.0%	AR	83.0%	DJ	83.0%	KE	83.0%	NE	83.0%	TH	83.0%
DE	83.0%	AU	84.4%	DO	83.0%	KG	83.0%	NG	83.0%	TJ	83.0%
DK	110.5%	AZ	83.0%	DZ	83.0%	KH	83.0%	NI	83.0%	TL	83.0%
EE	83.0%	BA	83.0%	EC	83.0%	KM	83.0%	NO	107.7%	TM	83.0%
EL	83.0%	BB	94.4%	EG	83.0%	KR	83.0%	NP	83.0%	TN	83.0%
ES	83.0%	BD	83.0%	ER	100.8%	KZ	83.0%	NZ	83.0%	TR	83.0%
FI	100.0%	BF	83.0%	ET	83.0%	LA	83.0%	PA	83.0%	TT	83.0%
FR	97.4%	BI	83.0%	FJ	83.0%	LB	97.2%	PE	83.0%	TW	83.0%
HR	83.0%	BJ	83.0%	FO	110.5%	LI	107.6%	PG	83.5%	TZ	83.0%
HU	83.0%	BO	83.0%	GA	90.3%	LK	83.0%	PH	83.0%	UA	83.0%
IE	100.0%	BR	83.0%	GE	83.0%	LR	125.2%	PK	83.0%	UG	83.0%
IT	83.0%	BW	83.0%	GH	83.0%	LS	83.0%	PS	94.1%	UK	114.6%
LT	83.0%	BY	83.0%	GM	83.0%	MA	83.0%	PY	83.0%	US	85.6%
LU	83.7%	BZ	83.0%	GN	83.0%	MD	83.0%	RS	83.0%	UY	83.0%
LV	83.0%	CA	83.0%	GT	83.0%	ME	83.0%	RU	83.0%	UZ	83.0%
MT	83.0%	CD	127.1%	GW	83.0%	MG	83.0%	RW	83.0%	VE	116.5%
NL	91.7%	CF	91.5%	GY	83.0%	MK	83.0%	SA	83.0%	VN	83.0%
PL	83.0%	CG	98.2%	HK	96.6%	ML	83.0%	SB	94.3%	VU	87.7%
PT	83.0%	CH	107.6%	HN	83.0%	MM	83.0%	SD	90.2%	WS	83.0%
RO	83.0%	CI	83.0%	HT	83.0%	MR	83.0%	SG	104.1%	XK	83.0%
SE	104.9%	CL	83.0%	ID	83.0%	MU	83.0%	SL	89.6%	YE	87.4%
SI	83.0%	CM	83.0%	IL	89.7%	MW	83.0%	SN	83.0%	ZA	83.0%
SK	83.0%	CN	83.0%	IN	83.0%	MX	83.0%	SR	83.0%	ZM	83.0%