



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
2415 EISENHOWER AVENUE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314

NSF 19-063

Dear Colleague Letter: Research Opportunities in Europe for NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows

April 29, 2019

Dear Colleague:

BACKGROUND

To further scientific and technological cooperation between the United States and the European Community, the National Science Foundation and the European Research Council signed an Implementing Arrangement on July 13, 2012 to enable U.S. scientists and engineers with NSF-funded CAREER awards and Postdoctoral Research Fellowships to pursue research collaboration with European colleagues supported through EU-funded European Research Council (ERC) grants.

Connecting researchers with complementary strengths and shared interests promotes scientific progress in solving some of the world's most vexing problems. This international research opportunity is mutually beneficial to the U.S. participants and the hosts through cooperative activities during research visits and establishing international research partnerships to enrich future research activities in the U.S. and Europe.

Under the Arrangement, the ERC Executive Agency (ERCEA) identifies ERC-funded research groups who wish to host NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows for research visits of up to one year within their ERC funding.

The 2018 Dear Colleague Letter for this opportunity noted that 2018 would be the final year in its current form. NSF is extending the current opportunity for one additional year. NSF intends to announce a new, related opportunity in FY 2020.

OPPORTUNITY

This letter invites current NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows to apply for research visits to any identified, appropriate European research group. Instructions on how to apply and other relevant policies and requirements are provided below. A similar Dear Colleague Letter

invites NSF CAREER awardees to participate (see [NSF 19-062](#)).

ERCEA has provided a list of ERC-funded principal investigators (PIs) and research teams interested in hosting NSF Postdoctoral Fellows. NSF Fellows should request this list via email from rnikolau@nsf.gov, and then communicate directly with ERC PIs to ascertain areas of mutual interest and research goals for a visit. Fellows must then discuss plans for their visit with the NSF Program Officer managing their NSF postdoctoral fellowship prior to submitting a request. If approved by NSF, the request is forwarded by NSF to ERCEA for review and for making arrangements with the ERC-funded project.

The European hosts will provide funding to support in-country living expenses during the visits.

NSF will provide travel funds to and from Europe.

Activities are subject to availability of funds and all applicable laws, regulations, policies, and programs of the ERC and NSF.

ELIGIBILITY

Only NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows with active fellowships are eligible to apply.

CONDITIONS

NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows may apply for a single short-term or long-term research visit. For definition, research visits of less than 6 months are considered short-term, whereas visits of 6 months to one year are long-term visits. The maximum length of a visit is limited to 12 months. Visits must be concluded prior to the end of the Fellowship.

Time spent in Europe will be in addition to, rather than in lieu of, the NSF-funded fellowship duration. NSF will cover round-trip transportation for the Fellow's visit and, in the case of long-term visits, for qualified family members (as defined in Uniform Guidance § 200.474 *Travel Costs*). During the visit, the Fellow's compensation will be provided from the existing ERC funding. Any applicable health coverage expenses, in accordance with the applicable national law and regulations, will also be borne through the ERC grant. Other eligible costs incurred during the visit that are directly related to the ERC-funded project may also be allowed. Fellowship awards will not be supplemented; payment for travel will be issued directly from NSF to the Fellow.

NSF Postdoctoral Fellows will be expected to report on the research visits in their NSF annual and final project reports, as appropriate, and may be asked to participate in follow-up evaluation activities.

HOW TO APPLY

NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellows should contact their cognizant NSF Program Officer to discuss the proposed visits prior to submitting their requests via email.

The request consists of:

- Description of research to be performed during the visit at the host location and how it relates to current research and broad career goals (no more than 3 pages)
- 2-page biographical sketch of the Postdoctoral Fellow
- 2-page biographical sketch of the ERC-funded PI host
- Time line for the proposed activity
- Confirmation of Institutional Review Board/Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee approvals, permits, other special clearances needed, if any
- Budget and budget justification
- Communication from the ERC-funded PI host indicating:
 1. how the proposed visit fits within the ERC-funded project;
 2. facilities and resources to be made available to the CAREER awardee; and
 3. expectations that the ERC-funded PI host has for the CAREER awardee's visit.
- Communication from the Fellowship sponsoring scientist indicating how the proposed visit fits within the research and career plans of the Fellow.
- Endorsement of the visit from the ERC-funded host institution.

Requests will be reviewed internally by NSF Program Officers and are subject to (a) the availability of funds, and (b) review of the quality of the request.

NSF may share the request in its entirety with ERC staff and the proposed ERC-funded PI host.

WHEN TO APPLY

Requests must be received at NSF at least 3 months prior to the proposed visit, but no later than June 21, 2019, for consideration using Fiscal Year 2019 funds.

CONTACT

For further information, please contact:

Roxanne Nikolaus, Program Director, Office of International Science and Engineering,
(703) 292-7578. Email: rnikolau@nsf.gov.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Keiser
Office Head

Office of International Science and Engineering

and

Karen Marrongelle

Assistant Director

Directorate for Education and Human Resources