



DOROTHY COFUND Frequently Asked Questions 2023

Version 1

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Introduction

This FAQ document is intended to support the DOROTHY COFUND programme, funded by three leading Irish national agencies, the Irish Research Council (IRC; the lead agency, which operates under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority), the Health Research Board (HRB) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and co-funded by the European Union Horizon 2020

programme under Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). The programme funds excellent research into **public health crises and their legacies**.

This FAQ document will be a 'living document' that will be regularly updated in response to questions received by the IRC, HRB and/or EPA. Changes will be recorded in a version control table above. It is therefore recommended that applicants refer back to the document regularly during the application process.

In the first instance, applicants should refer to the Guide for Applicants to help answer any questions they may have.

If the information provided below or in the Guide for Applicants does not help answer your question, **applicants should contact the Research Office at their proposed main host organisation** (the host institution within Ireland). Where Research Offices are unable to answer questions, they will liaise with the IRC, and questions will be answered in an updated version of this FAQ document.

A separate FAQ document concerning the secondment element of DOROTHY COFUND is available on the DOROTHY COFUND website.



Eligibility

- **Do I classify as an Experienced Researcher (ER)?**

The definition of ER in the H2020 MSCA programme will be applied: ERs must, at the call deadline, be in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience. Full-time equivalent research experience is measured from the date when an applicant obtained the degree that would formally entitle them to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in Ireland, even if a doctorate was never started or envisaged.

- **I obtained both my masters and PhD from an Irish HEI. Am I eligible for DOROTHY?**

Yes. The mobility rule applies to the outgoing phase only.

- **I am in my fourth year of Ph.D. and will be submitting my thesis late summer 2023. So, if at the call deadline, I am not in possession of the degree but have a provisional certificate from the university stating the date by which I will have the degree, will that make me eligible to apply?**

No. Applicants must be ERs as per the definition above, either possession of a doctoral degree or with at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience.

- **I received my PhD in 2009. Can I apply?**

Yes. The number of years since an applicant's doctoral degree was conferred has no bearing on eligibility for DOROTHY COFUND.

- **I am currently employed on permanent basis by an Irish HEI. Can I apply for DOROTHY (with my employing HEI as host organisation) and ask for a career break if successful?**

No. Permanent employees of an eligible HEI cannot apply to DOROTHY listing their employer as the Irish host organisation.

- **I am a permanent employee of an HEI in Croatia. Am I eligible to apply for DOROTHY?**

Yes. However, you will need to consider that applicants cannot have resided or carried out their main activity in the outgoing phase country for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before the call deadline. Also be aware that if your application is successful, you will sign an employment contract with your main (Irish) host organisation, and should not simultaneously be an employee elsewhere. Successful applicants must be in a position to commit full time to their DOROTHY COFUND research fellowship.

- **I am based in the USA and have a Doctor of Medicine degree (MD). Am I eligible to apply?**

The definition used by DOROTHY for “experienced researcher” is an applicant who, at the call deadline, is in possession of a doctoral research degree (such as a PhD) or has at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience. In different countries, ‘MD’ can refer to different qualifications. A medical doctor degree will be accepted only when it corresponds to a doctoral degree or if the researcher can demonstrate their appointment in a position that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g., professorship appointment). Medical doctor degrees corresponding to basic medical training as defined in Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC will not be considered a doctoral degree.¹

- **I do not have a PhD but have research experience. How do I know if I have enough experience to be eligible?**

Applicants should be able to demonstrate that they have at least equivalent to four years of full-time research experience. This may mean quantifying what percentage of your time over a current period was devoted to research. Years of ‘research experience’ are counted from the date on which the researcher obtained a degree entitling them to embark on a doctoral research programme, even if the doctorate was never started or envisaged.

- **What does ‘cofund’ mean in the name DOROTHY COFUND? Does DOROTHY only provide some funding and I will need to source other funding from elsewhere?**

‘Cofund’ means that the DOROTHY COFUND programme draws funding from a collaboration between the EU Horizon 2020 programme, under Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), and from three Irish funding agencies – the Irish Research Council (IRC), Health Research Board (HRB) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The amount each fellow will receive represents a complete, competitive salary (see ‘Remuneration and Employment’ below).

¹ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32005L0036> for further detail.

Applying

- **Am I entitled to submit multiple applications to DOROTHY?**

You can submit only one application per call. If you applied unsuccessfully for the first call, you may apply for the current call for applications.

- **How many total fellowships will be given in this call?**

25 fellowships in total will be awarded over two calls.

- **Can I see a list of previously successful applications and their project titles?**

A list of current DOROTHY fellows and their project titles will be available [on the IRC site](#) once current fellows have begun their fellowships.

- **When is the call opening and when is the deadline for applications?**

The call opens on 1 March, and the deadline for applications is 4pm (Irish time) 21 June 2023.

Mobility

- **Are successful applicants obliged to engage in international mobility?**

Yes, it is a requirement of this programme that successful applicants must engage in international mobility. Non-Irish HEIs (based anywhere in the world) will host and train fellows during the outgoing phase (months 1-18 of the fellowship). During the second phase of the fellowship (months 19-36), fellows must be hosted by an Irish institution.

- **Are hosting periods flexible within max months allowed? For example, can applicants spend 9 months in Ireland, followed by 18 months in another national context, followed by 9 months in Ireland?**

No. The fellowships must be structured such that during the first 18 months, the fellow is based in the outgoing host institution, and during the next 18-month period, based at their main (Irish) host institution.

- **In terms of eligibility for the mobility, is there a possibility of remote working or must the mobility involve a physical move? Or can it be hybrid?**

Horizon 2020 guidelines explicitly state that researchers to be recruited are required to undertake transnational mobility, i.e., physically relocate from one country to another.

- **Are applicants from all nationalities eligible to apply to DOROTHY?**

DOROTHY welcomes applicants from all over the world. However, there are eligibility requirements in terms of mobility. This may affect your fellowships' possible structure, depending on your citizenship or residency status. See below and the Guide for Applicants for details.

- **Can my first 18 months be spent in any country in the world?**

If the outgoing phase is to a country other than an EU Member State (MS) or Associated Country (AC), **as per the Horizon 2020 definition**, the applicant must be a national or long-term resident² of a MS or AC. If the outgoing phase is to a MS or AC, the applicant can be of any nationality.

If you are not a national or long-term resident of a MS or AC, your outgoing phase must be within a MS or AC. A list of Horizon 2020 MSs and ACs [is available here](#).

- **I am a German researcher currently based in Germany. Would I be able to spend my outgoing phase in Argentina?**

If you are a national or long-term resident of a MS or AC (see above), you may propose to spend your outgoing phase in any country.

- **I am a Brazilian researcher, based in Brazil. Can I spend my outgoing phase in the US?**

No. As you are not a MS or AC national, and you do not seem to qualify for long-term residency, you are not eligible to choose a Third Country as an outgoing phase host. Please consider outgoing phase host institutions based in MS/AC countries.

- **I am a French researcher, currently based in France. Can I structure my fellowship to spend 18 months in France and 18 months in Ireland?**

No. The applicant cannot have resided or carried out their main activity in the **outgoing phase** country for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before the call deadline.

Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays, attending conferences, and time spent as part of a procedure for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention are not taken into account.

- **I am a researcher based in India but I frequently collaborate with a university in Malaysia. Can I list the institution in Malaysia as my outgoing host?**

Yes. However, applicants cannot have resided or carried out their main activity in the outgoing phase country for more than 12 months in the three years immediately before the call deadline. Also be aware that if your application is successful, you will sign an employment contract with your main (Irish) host organisation.

² Long-term residence means a period of legal and continuous residence within one or more EU Member States or Horizon 2020 Associated Countries of at least 5 consecutive years. Periods of absence from the territory of the Member State or Horizon 2020 Associated Country shall be taken into account for the calculation of this period where they are shorter than 6 consecutive months and do not exceed in total ten months within this period of five years.

- **Can I spend my outgoing phase in the UK?**

For the purposes of DOROTHY COFUND, the UK is effectively considered as a MS. This is owing to the fact that DOROTHY COFUND is a Horizon 2020 programme. [See the list of Horizon 2020 MSs and ACs here](#). The rules concerning applicants' mobility, based on status as a national or long-term resident of a MS or AC, apply (see above and the DOROTHY COFUND Guide for Applicants). Please note that this is based on the information available to us at the time of posting (March 2023).

- **My outgoing phase will be spent in Italy, but I would like to undertake data collection in a third country. Is this possible?**

An applicant can conduct research activities in a country that is not their outgoing phase country, including a Third Country that is not a MS or AC, for a period of up to 6 months. Any activities carried out in the non-EU country must comply with the laws of that country and be allowed in at least one EU member state. The beneficiaries must confirm in the ethics self-assessment section of their proposal that this condition is met. Any such element of the fellowship must be agreed with main and outgoing supervisor.

Proposal planning

- **What do I need to secure in order to plan for my fellowship?**

You are required to secure two supervisors, one based in Ireland and one abroad. Both the main and outgoing supervisors must be staff of eligible institutions, and they both need to be experts in their field and have appropriate supervisory experience. At proposal stage, applicants should highlight the research track-record and supervision experience of their chosen supervisors. The suitability of all supervisors will be evaluated at peer review stage. **Applicants must not name supervisors on their application without gaining supervisors' explicit consent.**

A secondment host is not obligatory at application stage; however it is encouraged. When a non-academic secondment is foreseen (either at proposal submission stage or at a later stage), a secondment supervisor must be identified.

- **When should I start to contact supervisors and HEIs?**

You should begin reaching out to potential supervisors and HEIs as soon as possible.

- **Can you help me find a supervisor for my project?**

The IRC cannot advise on suitable supervisors. However, you may wish to consult our guide, '[Preparing to Apply for a DOROTHY Fellowship – Hints and Tips](#)' for suggestions on how to find potential suitable supervisors for your project.

A list of all eligible Higher Education Institutions and Research Performing Organisations in Ireland is available [on the IRC site](#). Any main supervisor should be an employee of one of these organisations.

- **I am interested in supervising a project for DOROTHY COFUND. Can you put me in touch with a suitable postdoc researcher?**

The IRC is not in a position to facilitate matching postdoctoral researchers with established research teams.

Research Topic

- **The theme of my proposal is literature during the Black Death Plague in the mid-1300s. Would this topic be accepted as fitting the theme of public health crises?**

Yes. The funders welcome applications from all disciplines, provided they fall within the remit of **public health crises and their legacies**. Research areas will include, but will not be limited to, epidemiology and population health; environmental science, ecology and environmental health; engineering of materials; biotechnology; biomedical science; psychology; economics; health inequality; health communication, health protection and health promotion; digital technology; anthropology; law; politics; philosophy; and medical humanities. Research topics that tackle diversity and inclusion are also welcome, as long as the project relates to public health crises. All proposals are peer reviewed by independent experts.

- **My research focuses on developing novel technologies to assist with cardiac defects. Is this topic eligible for funding?**

The focus of DOROTHY COFUND is on **public health crises and their legacies**. This means that a research topic in the broader field of human health, or on public health, will not necessarily meet the scope of DOROTHY COFUND. If you feel that your research addresses the theme of public health **crises**, you should ensure you make explicit why and how your project addresses this theme. Please refer to Section 2 of the Guide for Applicants for further detail on how 'public health crises' may be understood.

- **How will evaluators understand that my proposal falls within the remit of public health crises?**

Applicants will address this point in a dedicated section of their application, in the 'Excellence' section of the application form.

- **Are there any topics that are prohibited for DOROTHY COFUND?**

Under EU MSCA guidelines, DOROTHY COFUND is unable to fund any research project involving any of the following:

- human cloning for reproductive purposes
- genetic modification of human beings that could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be funded)
- creation of human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

Remuneration Package, Funding and Employment

- **Can I apply and then defer my fellowship start date if I am successful?**

Fellowships may not be deferred or suspended other than for eligible career breaks. Eligible career breaks include maternity leave, paternity leave, adoptive leave, prolonged sick leave and carer's leave. Provision of documented evidence of an eligible career break will be required if a deferral or suspension is to be granted. A decision on whether deferral is possible is at the discretion of the funders whose decision on the matter will be final.

- **What is the value of the fellowships?**

Fellowships are combined of a living allowance and mobility allowance and, if applicable, a family allowance. The gross amount of remuneration per month is €3,669 without family allowance, and €4,119 with family allowance. This is equivalent to gross amounts of €44,026 per year, or €49,429 with family allowance.

DOROTHY COFUND remuneration will also cover employers' costs, namely employer's pension and pay-related social insurance (PRSI).

- **What could be the maximum 'take-home' salary? Will there be tax deductions? Are there any charges apart from tax be deducted by institute?**

Living allowance, mobility allowance and family allowance will be subject to tax. The IRC cannot advise on the gross salary a fellow may receive as this will be dependent on the individual's specific tax situation. While Irish tax provisions allow us to calculate the exact final amount only after recruitment, no fellow will earn an annual salary lower than €44,026 (without family allowance) or €49,429 (with family allowance). These figures compare favourably with the national salary level.

- **What do I need to include in my project budget calculations?**

In the proposed budget, applicants should detail expenses necessary to carry out the research project. This may include, for example, costs of purchasing equipment or training courses. It does not include, for example, institutional overheads. For more information on completing the proposed budget and details of prohibited costs, see Appendix 1 of the [Guide for Applicants](#).

- **Are relocation costs covered for the outgoing phase?**

No. Relocating for the outgoing phase of the fellowship is an obligatory part of the programme structure, not a training or research expense, and so cannot be reimbursed.