



DOROTHY COFUND Frequently Asked Questions 2023

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Changes since most recent version

Change	Section
Additional question	Mobility
Additional questions	Proposal planning
Additional questions	Remuneration package & expenses, funding and employment

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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.

- **When the call closes in July 2023 I will have submitted my thesis but not have my PhD conferred. Can I apply?**

To be eligible to apply for DOROTHY COFUND, at the date of the call deadline, applicants should be in possession of a doctoral degree or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience.

If you have not yet graduated, you must have all the requirements for the award of a doctoral degree, including the submission of the hardbound corrected thesis, within the required timeline (i.e., by the call deadline).

- **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?**

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

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).



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.

- **In the application form, how should we provide in-text citations and the bibliographical list? One section of the form says "do not provide bibliographical lists or footnotes here". Where should we provide the bibliographical lists?**

You can make in-text citations where necessary, and then provide a bibliography in the 'Supplementary Documentation' section of the Smartsimple application form. This section also allows for including graphs, tables or maps if appropriate. Please do **not** use this section to include a list of your own publications.

- **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?**
- **Is it possible to break up the Irish HEI/return phase into a short (e.g. 6 months) period BEFORE the outgoing phase i.e. a fellowship with 6 months in Ireland 18 months outgoing and 12 months in Ireland?**
- **Can I begin my fellowship 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](#).

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.

- **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.

- **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 (April 2023).

- **Can I spend my outgoing phase in Northern Ireland?**

For the purposes of DOROTHY COFUND, it is possible to spend the outgoing phase at a host institution in Northern Ireland. The outgoing phase must be spent outside of the Republic of Ireland, and the return phase must be spent hosted by an institution within the Republic of Ireland.

- **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.

- **I completed my PhD at a university in the UK in October 2022. However, since April 2021 I have been living in a different country. The DOROTHY COFUND Guide for Applicants states that “the applicant cannot have resided or carried out their main activity in the outgoing phase country for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the call deadline.” As I have not lived in the UK since April 2021, am I eligible to apply for DOROTHY COFUND listing the UK as my outgoing host country?**

The MSCA Horizon 2020 guidelines state that “Researchers may not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the beneficiary/partner organisation [...] for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the co-funded programme's call deadline.” In this example, the potential applicant has been registered as a PhD student in the UK up until October 2022, thus for a greater period than 12 months out of the previous 36 months. They have been “carrying out their main activity” in the UK. The applicant will therefore not be able to list the UK as their outgoing host country in their DOROTHY COFUND application.

- **I am aware that I must go to the outgoing county first and then to Ireland after. But can I visit Ireland for a few days during my outgoing phase? What if I need to go back to the outgoing host to finish lab work for a few days once my phase in Ireland starts?**

Short visits to other institutions or relevant work environments are allowed under the DOROTHY COFUND programme. Short visits are different from a secondment or an outgoing phase in that the fellow will continue to be directly supervised by their main (or outgoing, as applicable) supervisor. Short visits can include international travel where appropriate. However, a core principle of MSCA mobility rules is that a fellow should not spend more than 50% of their fellowship in the main host country – in the case of DOROTHY COFUND, more than 18 months within Ireland. All short visits should be discussed with the relevant 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.

- **Can I have more than one supervisor at each host institution?**

No. DOROTHY COFUND fellows are free to work with other colleagues at their host institutions; indeed, fellows are encouraged to reach out to colleagues across disciplines and to build networks, in collaboration with their supervisor. However, fellows will have one named supervisor in each host institution: a main supervisor at their Irish host institution, and an outgoing supervisor for their outgoing phase. These supervisors will be named in the application and in the documentation relating to the fellowship.

- **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.

- **Does my mentor need to be located in Ireland?**
- **Does the mentor need to be in a university or can they work elsewhere, e.g., in industry?**

Your mentor is another member of your supervisory panel who can offer guidance on career development, and act as an ombudsman or mediator if need be. The mentor can be from any sector, and they do not need to be located in Ireland. As the mentor's role includes acting as a mediator with the supervisory panel (should the need arise), it may be helpful to ensure the mentor is familiar with the structures of the panel and the context of the project's work. The mentor does not need to be identified at proposal stage, and can be chosen within the first three months of the project beginning.

- **Is there a list of potential outgoing host institutions?**
- **Can you advise me which outgoing host might be best for me?**

Your outgoing host institution should be an appropriate environment for you to undertake your proposed research project. The IRC is unable to advise on suitable outgoing hosts. Refer to our [Guide for Applicants](#) and [Terms and Conditions](#) for information on the outgoing host. In your application, you should show how your proposed outgoing host is a suitable place to conduct your research project, and that your proposed outgoing supervisor is an appropriate supervisor for the fellowship. We would advise that you discuss potential outgoing hosts with your main supervisor in Ireland and the Research Office at your proposed host institution in Ireland.

- **The Gantt chart in the Implementation section of the application form should include DOROTHY COFUND training events, i.e. the four events plus the final conference. When will these events be? Where should I include them in my Gantt chart?**

Over the course of the two cohorts of fellows (awardees from Call 1 and from Call 2), fellowships will include four training events organised by the DOROTHY COFUND team and a final conference. The first of these events will be for fellows from Call 1, and the others will include fellows from Call 2. The dates of these events are not yet confirmed, so applicants may use estimated dates as part of the project schedule.

- **I would like to undertake a teaching qualification during the course of my DOROTHY COFUND fellowship. Can I do this?**

DOROTHY COFUND fellows should engage full time in fellowship-related activities during their funded project term. This can include relevant training activities or relevant extra activities such as teaching, involvement in grant writing activities, or occasional consultancy. Any training or extra activities should be discussed with the supervisory panel, deemed relevant to the research funded by the fellowship, and included in the fellow's Career Development Plan (submitted once the fellowship has begun). The overall extent of extra activities (contact and non-contact hours combined) should not exceed a total of 50 hours per academic term.

Applicants may wish to discuss training courses available at their host institution, and how they may fit the requirements of the DOROTHY COFUND programme, with the research office at their host institution. Please see our [Terms and Conditions](#) for more detail.

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 & Expenses, 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.

- **Do I need to include a budget calculation or is it worked out automatically?**
- **What do I need to include in my project budget calculations?**
- **Does my budget need to include indirect costs for the host university?**

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. Fellows will have a research expenses budget of €8400 for each year of the fellowship. The budget 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](#).

- **Can my research budget include things like travel and conference fees?**

Yes. Categories of eligible research expenses include:

- Essential research supplies, such as small consumables
- Pay-as-you-go access to national research infrastructure
- Software and hardware critical for the proposed research
- Archival research costs
- Conference travel and participation
- Generic and/or specialist disciplinary skills training
- Dissemination and communication costs
- Other costs e.g., publishing and write-up costs.

- **Is money transferred from my main host to my outgoing host institution while I am working there? How is this arranged? What rules apply to this transfer?**

Your main host institution in Ireland will remain your employer throughout the fellowship, meaning they will pay your salary. Any transfer of funds (for example, research expenses) between institutions will be agreed by institutions as part of their inter-institutional agreement, relating to the management of the fellowship. This is to be negotiated between the institutions, although the IRC provides a template Agreement when a fellowship is awarded. The Research Office at your proposed host institution in Ireland may be able to advise on what precise arrangements may be made, depending on your host institutions.

- **Are vouchers an eligible cost? They would be used to encourage participation in the research project. As this research involves participation over a period of time, an incentive for participants' time would (i) encourage them to participate and (ii) avoid withdrawals from the study.**

Incentives for research subjects and volunteers (such as cash or gift vouchers) are not considered eligible costs. This is standard across IRC programmes.

- **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.

- **Is it possible to apply for extended maternity/paternity leave or is it just the minimum allowed?**

During your Fellowship, you will be employed by your main host organisation within Ireland. Parental leave is thus arranged with your employer. The IRC policy on parental leave can be found [here](#) and the Leave for Parents and Carers Request Form is [here](#).

- **Are researchers with disabilities obliged to use their research funding budget to cover the cost of environmental barriers?**

Under EU Horizon 2020, there is a MSCA Special Needs Lump Sum allowance for researchers with special needs. The IRC is able to claim the SNLS allowance on behalf of the fellow. The special needs allowance is provided for researchers with disabilities, whose long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments are certified by a national authority. The allowance covers costs related to the fellow's disability which are necessary for participation in the action. It cannot cover costs which are already covered by another source, such as social security or health insurance.