



# CALL for MD RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

## 2021 POLICIES & GUIDELINES

The Fondation Pour l'Audition (FPA) offers three types of calls for proposals in Hearing Sciences for:

- French research laboratories to strengthen their research excellence
- young investigators (MDs or PhDs) to promote their training and mobility
- students to train them to research and promote scientific careers of French MD residents, speech therapy and audiology students interested in Hearing.

The overall aim of the FPA research support is to train the French future talents to research, promote research excellence in France in Hearing Sciences and discover solutions for the hearing impaired.

### ARTICLE I. OBJECTIVE OF THE CALL

The call for MD research fellowships aims to promote training and mobility of MDs and to encourage scientific careers in Hearing research.

**MD research fellowships cover a full-time stipend for 1 year.**

By stimulating new approaches and combining them with excellence, FPA wishes to promote innovations that will improve our hearing health in the future and contribute to France's influence in Hearing Sciences.

### ARTICLE II. ELIGIBILITY

FPA MD research fellowships are awarded to fellows holding a M.D. showing an interest in Hearing Sciences. Candidates holding a M.D./Ph.D. or a Ph.D. are ineligible.

To be eligible for an FPA fellowship, the M.D. fellow must:

- o be a French resident applying for a position in a foreign country,
- o have completed his/her residency 7 years ago at the most,
- o obtain a full-time position in the host laboratory.

Only laboratories within public or non-profit institutions are eligible for funding.

Fellows awarded an FPA fellowship in the past cannot compete for a new FPA fellowship.

Host laboratories are ineligible for funding if they hold an active FPA award. Research teams joining the Institut de l'Audition in Paris and participating to the Centres de Recherche en Audiologie are also ineligible for funding. Applications involving a member of the FPA Scientific Committee or Board of Directors and his/her laboratory are not eligible for an FPA fellowship.

### ARTICLE III. SCOPE OF RESEARCH

Only research projects addressing questions in the field of Hearing Sciences are eligible.

### ARTICLE IV. PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

Prepare the application using the 2021Word form available at

<https://www.fondationpourl audition.org/en/node/146>. No other form will be accepted.

### **Read and follow the instructions carefully.**

The document must be filled out in English *ONLY* and must comply with the format specifications and page limits detailed in this document. Do not reformat the forms or exceed the space provided in the different sections of the grant application. **Failure to comply will result in administrative rejection.** Decisions of administrative rejection are final and not subject to appeal.

#### 4.1 Privileged communication

Material and information provided by the applicant and his/her supervisor in the fellowship application are considered privileged communication with the exception of the lay summary, which will become public information if the proposal is funded.

#### 4.2 General instructions

Most of the sections in the application form are self-explanatory. The page numbering is set automatically.

Each page, except the front page, contains a heading named "Applicant" where the name of the applicant should be entered.

**The legal grant officer must be the head of the department of sponsored projects from the institution. Heads of laboratories or presidents of institutions cannot sign as a legal grant officer.**

#### 4.3 Specific instructions

Title of the project The title should not exceed 20 words.

##### Abstract (less than 400 words)

State the general interest of the project, the application's objectives and specific aims. Describe concisely the research design and methods for achieving the stated goals. Describe the rationale and techniques you will use to pursue these goals. **Clearly describe the expected results and the relevance to hearing health.** Do not exceed the space provided.

##### Rationale (less than 400 words)

Describe the novelty of your project, its relevance with regards to the mission of FPA and the potential impact of your project to advance research in Hearing Sciences.

##### Lay Summary (less than 400 words - **in both English and French**)

**Describe in plain, lay language** the aims of your research project, the means to be used to test your hypotheses and the relevance to hearing health. If the application is awarded, the lay summary will become public information. Therefore, **your summary must be written in simple words so that the general public can understand your research** and it shall not include proprietary/confidential information.

##### Research Plan

- Page limitations

Do not exceed 5 pages. All tables, charts, graphs, figures, diagrams, images and photographs must be included within the 5-page limit. References may be on additional pages.

- Font

For the research plan, use Arial font size 11 point. Greek letters are allowed. Same font size applies.

- Figures

Figures, graphs, charts, tables and figure legends may be small in size but must be clear and legible. Photographs and images must be a part of the electronic application file and cannot be sent separately or glued to the paper version.

- Page format

Use A4 page format with margins of 1,5 x 1,5 x 1,5 x 1,5 cm and single-spaced paragraphs. Include the name of the applicant in the heading.

Adherence to font and margin requirements is necessary.

If terms are not universally known spell out the term for the first time it is used and note the appropriate abbreviation in brackets. The abbreviation may be used thereafter.

- Structure of the research plan

A. Specific Aims

List the broad, long-term objectives and the goal of the specific research proposed and the rationale.

B. Background and Significance

Briefly sketch the background leading to the present application, critically evaluate existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill.

C. Preliminary Data

Provide the preliminary data pertinent to this application.

D. Research Design and Methods

Describe the research design, procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Indicate how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new methodology, novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies and their advantages over existing ones. Comment on the feasibility of the research plan of the study.

Describe the expected results for each aim and discuss the potential difficulties, pitfalls and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. State concisely the importance and health relevance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to the broad, long-term objectives. If the aims of the application are achieved, state how scientific knowledge or clinical practice will be advanced in the field of Hearing Sciences. In case of a human/clinical study, describe the ethical aspects of the project.

E. Deliverables

Detail all the deliverables planned to be achieved during the project.

F. Timeline

Provide the planned milestones per year for the entire project (Gantt chart).

G. Budget

Itemize supplies in separate categories such as glassware, chemicals, etc. and justify their use. Each category must be accompanied with the corresponding amount of money requested.

H. Literature Cited (no page limitation)

List all references. Follow the following format: Authors' names, Title, *Journal*, **Year**, Volume, Pages. If a publication contains more than 10 authors, list only the first 3 authors.

Fellow/Supervisor BioSketch Form (2 pages max)

- *Education, Training, Positions and Honors*

List in chronological order your education, training, current and previous positions, starting with your present position. Include start/end dates, position title, name of organization and department. In case of non-permanent/non-tenure or fixed term position, state the term of the current contract.

Select and list professional memberships and academic/professional honors received.

In case of gaps in your biosketch, please state the reason and time of the gap.

- *Peer-reviewed publications*

List your most significant peer-reviewed publications in the last five years in chronological order, beginning with the most recent ones. Include accepted manuscripts in press but omit manuscripts submitted or in preparation. Follow the following format: Authors' names, Title, *Journal*, **Year**, Volume, Pages and mark with an asterisk the publications obtained with FPA funds.

- **Fellowships - For Fellow BioSketch Form only**

List active, approved, completed and pending fellowships for the last three years using the following template:

Project number: .....

Start date – end date: .....

Funding organization: ..... % effort: .....  
Title of project: ..... Goals of project: .....  
Award amount: .....  
Overlap (justify): .....  
For pending applications, state the expected notification date.

### Career development plan

The candidate and the supervisor are jointly responsible for the preparation of the career development plan. A timeline including a publication plan is strongly encouraged.

#### o *Fellow's Background*

Describe the candidate's commitment to a career in research. Describe all of the candidate's professional responsibilities at the grantee institution and elsewhere and describe their relationship to the proposed activities on the career award.

Describe prior training and how it relates to the immediate objectives and long-term career plans of the candidate.

Describe the candidate's research efforts to this point in his/her research career, including any publications, prior research interests and experience.

Provide evidence of the candidate's potential to develop into an independent research investigator.

#### o *Career Goals and Objectives*

Describe a systematic plan: (1) that shows a logical progression from prior research and training experiences to the proposed research and career development experiences during the career award period and then to independent investigator status; and (2) that justifies the need for further career development to become an independent investigator.

#### o *Fellow's Plan for Career Development/Training Activities During Award Period*

Describe the new or enhanced research skills and knowledge that will be acquired by the fellow as a result of the proposed award. Describe any structured activities that are part of the developmental plan, such as coursework, or workshops that will help the fellow learn new techniques or develop needed professional skills. Briefly discuss each of the activities, other than research, in which the fellow is expected to participate. Include a percentage of time involvement for each activity by year, expressed in person months, and explain how the activity is related to the proposed research and the career development plan.

Describe the professional responsibilities/activities including involvement in other research projects. Explain how these responsibilities/activities will help ensure career progression to an independent research investigator, including (1) didactic (if any) and research components; and (2) relevant research and educational resources of the institution. The didactic and research components must be designed to develop the necessary knowledge and research skills in scientific areas relevant to the fellow's career goals.

### Supervisor's Research Support

List active, approved, completed and pending grant supports for the last three years using the template provided above for fellowships.

### Facilities and Resources of the Host Institution

Describe the institution and outline the specific expertise available for the research at the host institution and that of any associated institutions if applicable. Describe the infrastructure, logistics, facilities offered in as far they are necessary for the good implementation of the fellow's project, training and transfer of knowledge.

The nature and the quality of the research team/environment as a whole should be outlined, together with the measures taken to integrate the fellow in the different areas of expertise, disciplines, and international networking opportunities that the host could offer.

Describe briefly how the host will contribute to the advancement of the fellow's career and how the mentoring will be organized. The active contribution of each member of the team to the research and training activities of the fellow should also be described.

#### 4.4 Appendix material

- *Letter of acceptance from the laboratory*

A letter of acceptance from the laboratory is required, insuring that dedicated space is provided to the applicant, as well as funding for the research the applicant will perform, and appropriate laboratory resources.

- *Reference letters*

Three letters of recommendation in English must be provided.

- *Notice of approval from ethics committees*

If human or animal subjects are involved in the project, notice of approval from the relevant ethical committees are required<sup>1</sup>. **As the time to obtain the approval may be long, notice of submission to ethical committees are accepted and must be provided at the time of application** (sponsor<sup>2</sup> agreements are not accepted). **Failure to comply will result in administrative withdrawal.** However, if the project is approved by FPA, the formal notice of approval from the ethics committee is required prior to July 4, 2021. **Failure to comply will result in the cancellation of the funding.**

- *Salary grid of the institution*

The salary grid for MD research fellows from the host institution is required along with a letter from Human Resources indicating the position offered to the fellow, its duration and the amount of the fellow's salary per year. Also, the letter should mention the time effort of the supervisor dedicated to the fellow supervision and the corresponding salary.

**Do not attach any documents other than those specifically requested.**

### **ARTICLE V. SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION**

In signing the application, the applicant, his/her supervisor and legal grant officer agree to comply with the FPA policies.

#### 5.1 Assembling your application

Assemble the pages in the order specified in the form. Appendix material must be placed at the end of the application. Each page of the appendix material must be marked with the name of the applicant and numbered.

#### 5.2 Electronic submission

The application (2 MB max) must be submitted electronically as a single PDF file through the e-submission portal at <https://www.fondationpourlaudition.org/en/node/146> by **January 20, 2021 midnight (Central European Time)**.

**Certified digital signatures & seals are accepted but not scanned signatures.**

#### 5.3 Paper copy

The original paper application **must contain all the required signatures** on the front page and must arrive by February 12, 2021 to: FONDATION POUR L'AUDITION - 13, rue Moreau - 75012 Paris, France. **Certified digital signatures & seals are accepted but not scanned signatures.**

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* ANSM, CPP, Comité d'Éthique en Expérimentation Animale, Autorisation de projet utilisant des animaux à des fins scientifiques" from the Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation, ...

<sup>2</sup> The French equivalent of "sponsor" is "promoteur"

#### 5.4 General considerations

No paper application will be returned.

The application must be complete and accurate at the time of submission. An application is considered complete only when accurate electronic and paper copies have both been received by their respective deadlines and complies with the FPA policies.

The electronic and paper copies must match entirely. No modifications are allowed. If changes are made, the application will be rejected. If minor administrative changes are needed after submission (such as incorrect address), the applicant should contact FPA regarding these changes.

No supplementary material or updates will be accepted after the deadline. The only exceptions are missing documentation requested by FPA.

Incomplete applications, applications not complying with the FPA policies or applications with false statements will be administratively rejected and not returned to the applicant.

**Late applications will not be accepted.**

#### 5.5 Acknowledgment of receipt

Upon receipt of the electronic copy of the fellowship application by FPA, the fellow, supervisor and legal grant officer will receive an acknowledgment of receipt to the e-mail addresses listed in the application.

#### 5.6 Maximum submissions

The same application cannot be resubmitted more than 2 times.

### **ARTICLE VI. PEER REVIEW PROCESS**

The FPA policies are intended to ensure that applications are evaluated on a fair and timely process, free of bias.

#### 6.1 Admissibility and review process

FPA verifies the admissibility of the applications and compliance with the present FPA policies.

Compliant applications are then submitted for review to the FPA Scientific Committee, composed of national and international scientists chosen for their expertise related to Hearing Sciences. To view the list of the FPA Scientific Committee members, visit:

<https://www.fondationpourlaudition.org/en/support-us/research-121>.

#### 6.2 Evaluation criteria

The FPA Scientific Committee will review the applications using the following evaluation criteria:

- The motivation of the applicant.
- The novelty and feasibility of the research project and its short-term perspectives in term of results.
- The expertise of the host laboratory.
- The support of the supervisor.

The FPA Scientific Committee will select the award recipients based on the above criteria.

The FPA Scientific Committee is sovereign in its deliberations, which are confidential and not subject to any appeal in any way by the applicant, his/her supervisor or a representative of the host institution. If the quality of the applications does not meet the FPA requirements, the FPA Scientific Committee is free to dismiss all the applications and not award any fellowship in the framework of the 2021 call for tender.

The awards recipients proposed by the FPA Scientific Committee are subject to the approval of the FPA Board of Directors.

#### 6.3 Review report

At the time the applicants will be notified about the outcome of their applications, they will also receive an anonymous review report related to their research project.

#### 6.4 Breach of review

Applicants, as well as their supervisors or representatives of the host institution, may not contact any member of the FPA Scientific Committee regarding their application during the review process.

Failure to comply with this policy will create serious breaches of confidentiality and conflicts of interest in the peer review process that will lead to the administrative rejection of the application.

Members of the FPA Scientific Committee are required to notify FPA if they are contacted by an applicant.

### **ARTICLE VII. AWARD CONSIDERATIONS**

#### 7.1 Award amount

If awarded, the host institution will receive one-year fellowship covering the salary, taxes and fringe benefits of the fellow based on the institution salary grid and up to 80.000 Euros for a full-time salary. The exact amount of the salary will be set according to the salary grid of the host institution.

FPA neither covers overhead/indirect costs.

#### 7.2 Award activation and management

The date for the award activation will be decided by the applicant in agreement with his/her supervisor and host institution but cannot be set prior to October 1, 2021.

Shortly after the award notification, a mandatory face-to-face meeting between the fellow, his/her supervisor, grant officer and FPA will be scheduled. The related expenses will not be covered by FPA.

**Failure to comply will result in administrative withdrawal.**

#### 7.3 Grant agreement

The conditions under which FPA will fund the fellowship will be addressed by signing a grant agreement issued by FPA between FPA and the host institution where the principal investigator is the fellow's supervisor. If the grant is not signed by the parties by December 15, 2021 the funding will be automatically cancelled.

#### 7.4 Award overlap

The applicant must declare if he/she applied for a fellowship to another funding agency.

As FPA does not allow double funding, the applicant awarded different fellowships must choose a single award.

#### 7.5 FPA Laureate Day

A Laureate Day aiming to explain how the award will be managed to awardees will be organized early September 2021. The presence of each laureate, his/her supervisor and his/her grant officer to the event is mandatory. **Failure to comply will result in administrative withdrawal.**

### **ARTICLE IX. SUSPENSION, CANCELLATION OR ADJOURNMENT OF THE CALL**

If circumstances require it or for reasons beyond its control, FPA reserves the right to modify the present policies or to suspend, cancel or adjourn the organization of the 2021 call for fellowships without affecting its liability.

### **ARTICLE X. KEY DATES**

Launch of the 2021 call for fellowships	December 1, 2020
Closing of the 2021 call for fellowships	January 20, 2021
Award notification	End of June 2021
Award activation	October 1, 2021
Deadline for grant agreement signature	December 15, 2021

### **ARTICLE XI. SUPPORT**

For assistance, contact FPA at Fondation Pour l'Audition – 13, rue Moreau – 75012 Paris, France.

e-mail: [research@purlaudition.org](mailto:research@purlaudition.org)