

FAQ

EMPOWER Fellowships Programme 2021-2022

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Eligibility

1. Am I eligible for the EMPOWER Fellowship programme?

Applicants must be **nationals of the following ICGEB Member States**: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova (Republic of), Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad & Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

Preference will be given to nationals from developing countries, particularly from [Least Developed Countries](#).

Applicants may not apply for fellowships to be undertaken in their country of origin, unless working abroad at the time of application.

Pre-doc and post doc researchers may apply, although preference will be given to scientists having already completed their PhD/Master or equivalent.

No age limit applies, but **preference** will be given to candidates **below the age of 45**.

Good working knowledge of **English** is mandatory for fellowships at ICGEB New Delhi and Cape Town.

2. In which countries can I perform my fellowship period?

EMPOWER fellowships may take place at the **ICGEB laboratories in [New Delhi](#), India and [Cape Town](#), South Africa**, or in an identified host institution in one of the ICGEB Member States mentioned above (Q1).

At the beginning of the online application procedure, you will be requested to indicate if you are applying for mobility to an ICGEB Component (New Delhi or Cape Town) or for mobility to a different ICGEB country among the ones that are eligible for this call (Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova (Republic of), Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad & Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe).

Research proposal

3. How to write my research proposal?

Your proposal should contain:

- Title
- Abstract of your research (max 200 words)
- Brief description of your proposed research (max 1000 words and 1 image or table)
- Specific aims of the project (max 200 words)
- Cited literature (max 200 words)

Please make sure that the proposal targets skills and knowledge that will be useful for you and your institute when you return home.

4. Which areas of research are eligible for this call?

The research **proposal** should focus on your current research at your institute and be relevant to ICGEB research areas, namely **Health (Infectious Diseases and Non-Communicable Diseases), Sustainable and Effective Agriculture, Industrial Biotechnology and Renewable Energy**. Please, have a look at the webpage: <https://www.icgeb.org/science/>

Particularly, for mobility to ICGEB Components, please see the active research groups at the Scientific Faculty pages ([ICGEB Cape Town](#), [ICGEB New Delhi](#)).

5. When can I start my fellowship?

In the application form, you will be requested to indicate the desired start date of your fellowship. This can be set tentatively from **November 1st, 2021, in agreement with the host supervisor**. The fellow has a duration of **6 months**. Please note that all fellowships **shall possibly be completed by June 2022**.

Application procedure

6. How to apply for an EMPOWER Fellowship?

To apply for an EMPOWER Fellowship, you shall create an account on ICGEB Service Gateway portal (<https://isg.icgeb.org/auth/login>) and complete all the required sections.

Before starting the application online, you shall contact the ICGEB Group Leader of your choice in New Delhi or Cape Town, or the Principal Investigator of the identified hosting laboratory in one of the eligible ICGEB Member States, to verify interest and availability of the hosting group of your choice and define together the proposed research project. Please, indicate in the email subject your details according to the following format “EMPOWER Fellowship_ Name_ Surname”.

We strongly recommend sending your potential supervisor an email indicating why you are interested to join her/his group, including an updated CV and an outline of the proposed research project (2 pages maximum). Highlight your research experience, previous presentations and publications, what you expect to achieve through the fellowship. This will show that you are serious and well qualified. Do not send a general circular message as this is unlikely to be successful.

Kindly note that the written statement from the Group Leader who is willing to support your project is mandatory to apply for a fellowship at the ICGEB Components.

7. How to contact ICGEB Group Leaders?

You can find the contact details of ICGEB Group Leaders on ICGEB website at the [Scientific Faculty](#) page. By clicking on the Group Leader name, you will find her/his e-mail address.

For ICGEB Group Leaders in NEW DELHI, India: [ICGEB New Delhi, India](#)

For ICGEB Group Leaders in CAPE TOWN, South Africa: [ICGEB Cape Town, South Africa](#)

8. Which documents are needed besides the project proposal?

Documents	ICGEB Component (South Africa or India)	Other Member States
Project Proposal	Yes	Yes
Motivation letter (max 200 words)	Yes	Yes
CV of Head of the Receiving Laboratory and complete list of publications (in English)	No	Yes, to be uploaded <u>by the applicant</u> . Please contact the Head of the Receiving Laboratory to receive the document
Written Statement from the Group Leader of the hosting lab	Yes, to be uploaded <u>directly by the Group Leader</u>	No
A Letter from 2 referees	Yes, <u>to be included directly by the referees*</u>	Yes, <u>to be included directly by the referees*</u>
Complete candidate CV in pdf, including publications if available	Yes	Yes
A valid identification document (passport or identity card)	Yes	Yes
English Certificate (TOEFL, Cambridge or similar)	Yes, if available (Not requested when scholastic education has been undertaken in English)	No Different language certificates might be requested by different host institutions

9. How to get a Written Statement from the ICGEB Group Leader (*for mobility to ICGEB Components only*)?

First, you should contact the Group Leader you would like to work with to present a short project proposal and discuss possible start and end dates of your research visit. When writing to the Group Leader, please indicate in the email subject your details according to the following format “EMPOWER_ Name_ Surname”. After reaching an agreement on the proposed project, the Group Leader shall provide you with the written statement (by email).

In the meantime, create your account on the [ICGEB Service Gateway portal](#) and select the research group of your choice from the list. You shall upload the written statement previously received from the Group Leader in the attachments section of the application portal, before completing the submission procedure. The Group Leader will receive an automatic notification when the application has been completed and submitted.

10. How to get an authorization from the Head of the Home Laboratory and its Legal Representative and from the Head of the Receiving Laboratory and its Legal Representative (*for mobility to other ICGEB Member States*)?

If you choose EMPOWER mobility to other ICGEB Member States (other than the ICGEB Components in Cape Town and New Delhi), you will need to indicate in the application form the details and correct email address of the Head of the receiving laboratory and of the Head of the home laboratory. The persons indicated will receive a notification from the portal and they will be able to confirm the data you have entered.

11. How do I know which facilities are available in the receiving institution (*for mobility to other ICGEB Member States*)?

To ensure all the facilities necessary for your project proposal are available in the host institution, please contact your host institution.

12. Who should I indicate as referees?

For both schemes (mobility to ICGEB Components in Cape Town and New Delhi and mobility to other ICGEB Member States), you must provide the full name and valid email addresses of two (2) referees who can provide a letter of reference. At least one of these should be a member of the University or College you attended most recently.

The referees will receive an automatic notification from the application portal requesting to upload their letter of reference. They will be able to access the portal through the link provided in the notification email (no need for them to register to the portal), and then upload the letter.

You will not be able to view the letters of support, however you will be able to verify if the letters have been uploaded.

IMPORTANT: once your application is completed, please do not forget to click on “Send” button (step 7) to finalise the application procedure and be able to upload the requested attachments.
