



**ICGEB** International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology

## ICGEB Arturo Falaschi Fellowship Programmes

### Scientific Mobility for Advanced Research Training (SMART) – ICGEB SMART Fellowship Programme

## Frequently Asked Questions

*Search here to find answers to your questions regarding Eligibility, Applications, Certificates and more*

### Eligibility criteria

**Can I apply if I am not a national of an ICGEB Member State?**

No, applicants must be nationals of an ICGEB Member State.

**I belong to a Signatory Country. Can I apply?**

No, the programme is open only to nationals of full ICGEB Member States.

**I have double citizenship. Am I eligible for an ICGEB SMART fellowship?**

Yes, as long as one of your nationality belongs to an ICGEB Member State.

**My country is among the ICGEB Member States but does not have an Affiliated Centre. Am I eligible?**

The Arturo Falaschi fellowships are open to all Member States, not only those with an Affiliated Centre.

**Can I apply for a SMART fellowship if the receiving laboratory is in Italy (or India/South Africa)?**

SMART fellowships for mobility support to laboratories located in Italy, India and South Africa can be considered only if the research activity proposed is not covered by one of the ICGEB laboratories (please see ICGEB Arturo Falaschi Short-term fellowships).

**Is there an age limit to apply?**

There is no age limit. However, preference is given to young scientists at the beginning of their research career.

**I would like to apply for a SMART fellowship but I do not have a master degree. Am I eligible?**

No, the minimum requirement for applying is an MSc or equivalent.

**Is it compulsory to be a PhD student in order to apply for a SMART fellowship?**

No. Applicants should be either registered for a PhD or have obtained their PhD degree within the last 5 years. Young scientists holding an MSc or equivalent can also apply.

**I got my PhD 8 years ago, am I eligible for a SMART fellowships?**

No. Applicants should have obtained their PhD degree within the last 5 years.

## Host supervisor and receiving Institute

### **Is it compulsory to have a host supervisor/receiving Institute to apply for a SMART fellowship?**

The ICGEB SMART Fellowship programme promotes the mobility of researchers between ICGEB Member States and should show clear evidence of strong collaboration between the home/host laboratories.

Applicants must have a host institute before applying, as the written agreement/approval of the host institute is an integral and indispensable part of the SMART application to be complete.

### **Should I provide the information on the Host and home laboratories?**

No, the Home and Host labs will both receive an individual automatic message with a link to access your application to confirm the data requested from them and to confirm that they agree with your fellowship submission.

It is therefore important that you make sure that the contact details provided for the Heads of the Host/Home laboratories are valid as the system will send them an automatic message with a link where each of the Heads can enter the requested information and upload the necessary documents.

### **How can I know if the Home/Host lab have submitted the requested information/documents?**

You will receive an automatic notification when your Home/Host labs will complete their section in your application. You will be able to verify if the Home/Host labs have completed their sections of your application through the ICGEB Service Gateway under the "My fellowships application" section and solicit the Home/Host labs in case they have not yet provided the necessary information.

Please note that you will not be able to view the content of the Home/Host lab sections, only verify if the necessary information has been sent.

### **My Home/Host labs have not received the email with the link to complete their sections of my SMART application. What should they do?**

It may be possible that the automatic email of request has been delivered to their SPAM mailbox. Ask them to check this mailbox. If no message is found, they should contact [support@igeb.org](mailto:support@igeb.org)

### **Are there any specific lists of eligible laboratories appointed by ICGEB for the SMART Fellowship programme?**

No, a list of suitable laboratories is not available as all labs are eligible as long as they are located in one of the ICGEB Member States and that there is clear evidence of a strong collaboration between the laboratory of the applicant and that of the Host Supervisor. Please select the laboratory/group most suitable to your research and which meets the above criteria.

### **Is it possible for the receiving laboratory to be located in a Signatory Country?**

No, the host laboratory must be located in one of the ICGEB Member States.

## Application procedure

### How should I submit my application?

The first essential step is to create an account at: <https://isq.icgeb.org/auth/login>

The applicants must then submit their applications online via the dedicated portal (<https://www.icgeb.org/activities/fellowship/http-www-icgeb-org-smart-app-form-doc/>)

The platform for submission is structured so that you can save your application anytime you wish before sending the full proposal. You can therefore prepare your application during several days, you do not need to connect to the portal and complete the submission all in one go.

The application process is divided in 8 steps, each step requires you to enter some mandatory data. Once you filled all the required data press the "**Next**" / "**Save**" button to proceed. You can return to the previous step by clicking the "**Back**" button.

### What documents do I need to send?

- 1) Copy of your passport, even if expired (only the page with personal details is required);
- 2) Your updated CV and publications list;
- 3) Curriculum Vitae of the head of the receiving laboratory complete with the list of his/her publications (DO NOT send copy of any papers).

### Where should I upload the attachments?

The attachments are to be uploaded at the end of the application. This operation will be possible only after completing all the fields/sections. You will have to confirm your submission by clicking the green button "**send**" and you will be automatically directed to the Attachment section where to upload all the necessary documents. Please note that the system does not foresee the possibility of attaching other documents other than those mandatory.

### Are there any word/character limits for the SMART application?

The following sections of the online application have a word limit:

- Abstract of your research (max 200 words)
- Brief description of your proposed research and purpose of the visit (max 1,000 words)
- Project timetable (max 200 words)
- Facilities available in the receiving institution (max 300 words)
- Reasons for selecting this particular hosting laboratory for this fellowship (max 300 words)
- Motivation letter (max 200 words)

### How many reference letters are required for my SMART application?

Two (2) reference letters, at least one of these should be a member of the University or College you attended most recently.

Please request your referees to upload their letters via the link received via email (from the address [notifications@icgeb.org](mailto:notifications@icgeb.org)) by the application closing date.

### Will I be informed once the referees have submitted their letters of reference?

Applicants will receive an email once the referee upload his/her letter of reference.

Please make sure that the contact details of the referees are valid as the system will send an automatic message with a link where the referee can upload the recommendation letter.

You will be able to verify if the letters of support have been submitted through the ICgeb Service Gateway under the "My fellowships application" section and solicit the referees in case they have not yet provided this information.

Please note that you will not be able to view the letters of support only verify if they have been sent.

### Can I submit the recommendation letters together with my application?

No, do not send the reference letters, as they will not be considered. Please request your referees to upload their letters by the application closing date through the link they will receive when you submit your application.

### Who should write the reference letters? Can one of them be the Host Supervisor?

Normally the reference letters should be written by a person who is familiar with your work/plan of study, at least one of these should be a member of the University or College you attended most recently. Reference letters from the prospective host supervisor are not generally accepted.

### Do I need to provide the English language proficiency certificate (TOEFL/IELTS)?

No, this certificate is not requested for the SMART fellowship.

### How many calls are available each year?

There are two calls, one in March (deadline: 31 March) and one in September (deadline: 30 September).

**I have submitted my application two days ago but have not received any acknowledgment from ICGEB?**

As soon as you complete your online application and confirm the submission you will receive an automatic notification confirming that your application has been received. This automatic message confirms only that your submission has been successful, not that your application has been admitted to the selection.

Please note that an e-mail of acknowledgment, confirming that your application is complete and admitted to the selection, is sent only after verification that all the requested documents have been provided. Please allow at least 15 days for the notification as the verification of documents takes some time.

**What should I do if I make a mistake in the application or upload the wrong attachments?**

If you have already submitted your application and/or attached all the documents, you need to contact our IT Unit at: [support@icgeb.org](mailto:support@icgeb.org)

If you have not yet submitted your application, you can revise it anytime.

## Other general queries

### **How much is the stipend for a SMART fellowship?**

The stipend ranges from USD 800 to USD 1,500 monthly, according to local conditions in the receiving country and seniority of the applicant.

### **Will the receiving Institute be provided with bench fees? How much?**

A bench fee of USD 500 monthly is paid directly to the receiving laboratory based on the recommendation of the ICGEB Fellowships Committee. This amount is a contribution to the implementation of the research project proposal presented by the candidate and it is provided following the recommendation of the ICGEB Fellowships Committee, during the selection, depending on the type of project.

### **What is the duration for a SMART fellowship?**

Between 3 to 9 months as maximum.

### **Can SMART fellowships be extended beyond the original awarded period?**

No, SMART fellowships cannot be extended. For further training a new application will need to be sent.

### **Is it possible to divide the SMART fellowship in two periods?**

No, SMART fellowships cannot be divided in two (or more) periods.

### **Do I have to pay for my own health insurance?**

Medical health insurance coverage is provided by ICGEB for the entire duration of the fellowship.

### **Do I have to book and pay for my travel abroad?**

No, the fellowship includes provision for travel expenses from the participant's home country to the Host lab country at the beginning of the fellowship and a return travel provision upon completion of the fellowship. Please do not book your travel or pay for it as this expense will not be reimbursed.

### **Is there any provision for family members?**

ICGEB makes no financial provision, nor can it provide administrative support for family members of participants in the fellowship programme.