

Brussels, November 2013

BACK TO BELGIUM GRANTS

Initiative aiming at encouraging the return in Belgian public research centres of researchers working abroad

Information note

1. Goal of the initiative

- Promoting the return in Belgium, in a public research institution, of highly qualified researchers living abroad, in order to valorise their expertise and reinforce the national S&T-potential.

2. Target group

- Scientists of high level, who are working in research centres abroad at the foreclosure date of the Call for proposals.
 - The stay abroad must be of a **post-doctoral nature**, and of a minimal duration of **2 years**, whatever the country (intra- or extra-EU).
 - The candidates will be of Belgian citizenship or will have stayed at least 3 years in Belgium, for R&D or educational (higher education) activities, before their post-doctoral stay abroad.

The 2 years postdoctoral period abroad is calculated as the sum of all postdoctoral stays abroad, no matter how long.

3. Duration of the grants

The Back to Belgium grants attributed to the researchers have a maximal duration of 24 months.

4. Host units

The *Belgian research units* that can host researchers in the framework of this initiative belong to public research institutions. These units will have an adequate structure and size, enabling them to welcome the researcher in the best conditions. These are research teams concerned, **among others**, by the inter-university attraction poles (IUAP's) or the research programs funded by the Federal authority, or belonging to a Federal Scientific Institution.

5. Application procedure

The candidates will send the [official application form](#) to the Belgian Science Policy. The applications will be introduced by the researchers together with the host institution.

For the 2014 selection, the foreclosure date is **Friday 28 February 2014, before 17.00**.

The procedure is the following:

- a paper copy of the application form, with the required signatures, and with the appendices AND the recommendation letters, **MUST** be sent to BELSPO / 231 avenue Louise / B-1050 Brussels,

AND

- an electronic version, with the appendices but without the recommendation letters, **must** also be sent by e-mail to bernard.delhause@belspo.be.

6. Evaluation and selection

The Belgian Science Policy will proceed to a first examination of the candidatures to check their eligibility, as specified in the application form and the check-list.

The selection is made by an international, multidisciplinary and inter-university jury of Belgian and foreign experts, chaired by the President of the Belgian Science Policy, or his representative. Only eligible candidatures will be presented to the jury.

The selection criteria are, among others:

- the scientific level of the candidate (CV, publications...);
- the content of the research project and its feasibility
- the concordance of the project with the expertise of the candidate and with the on-going research projects in the host unit;
 - the post-doctoral expertise acquired abroad;
 - the valorisation of this expertise and its added value for the host unit;
 - the integration perspectives of the candidate;
 - the motivations of the candidate on her/his return to Belgium.

For elements on the Gender dimension in Research and how to incorporate it: [Gender in EU-funded Research](#) and [Gender chek-list](#).

The funded candidates will begin their research activities in the host unit **between the 1st September 2014 and the 1st September 2015**.

7. Financial conditions

Financially, the Back to Belgium grants involve:

- A wage, equivalent to the one afforded to a “first assistant” (wage scale SW21) belonging to the scientific personnel of the Federal Scientific Institutions, and adapted to take the seniority of the researcher into account (according to the Royal Decree of 25/2/2008 concerning the status of the scientific personnel of the Federal Scientific Institutions, in modification of the Royal Decree of 21/04/1965);
- A unique travel allocation of 1, 500 EUR for the return in Belgium of the researcher;
- A research credit of 15,000 EUR per year, **to be used by the researcher** inside the host unit.

The researcher is hired by the host institution. The wages and research expenditures are first paid by the institution and then reimbursed to the institution by the Belgian Federal Science Policy. This will be done on a quarterly basis, after presentation of the original relevant documents.

8. Reports

At the **end of the first year**, the researcher is expected to deliver an intermediary report on the evolution of the research project, in collaboration with his/her promoter.

At the end of the Back to Belgium grant, a more exhaustive report will be delivered on the findings and on the added value for the research programme to which the research is connected and for the host unit in general. The report, including the promoter's appreciation, will also mention the perspectives of integration of the researcher in the Belgian scientific milieu.

An abstract in electronic format (preferably in English) of **maximum 1 page** will also be written at the end of the research project, for vulgarisation purpose.

If needed, a separate report on the respect of ethical rules will be asked at the end of the research project.

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Please note that this information note has no official character; it is a translation of the two official notes in French and Dutch. The official notes and the application form can be found on the Belspo website: http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/call_grants_retour_en.stm.