

FAQs – Postdoc fellowships

Can an application be introduced before the Ph.D. has been obtained?

Yes, if the Ph.D. is expected within a few months, in which case the expected date of presentation of the Ph.D. thesis has to be mentioned in the application. The candidate may be selected conditionally meaning that the sojourn can only start after receipt of the Ph.D. certificate and a copy has been sent to BELSPO.

At the time of application can the candidate work in another country than his/her own nationality?

Yes, but the candidate has to prove the intention and the possibility to return to his/her home country. A detailed recommendation letter is requested from the home institution concerned declaring the interest in the research profile of the candidate as well as the availability of a research position after the postdoc sojourn in Belgium. It is remembered that among the selection criteria the added value for the home institution as well as prospects for further bilateral cooperation are crucial elements.

Should the sojourn of the researcher overlap the duration of the BELSPO project?

The BELSPO project must still be ongoing at the time of the deadline of the application. The sojourn can exceed the term of such a project as far as the research subject remains in the frame of the project and has an added value.

Can I introduce my own application?

No, only the Belgian promoters who have an ongoing project financed by BELSPO or the director of a federal research institute can submit the application. BELSPO will not interfere in the choice of a promoter or a host institution.

When do the results of the selection get to be known?

Ideally the jury should be constituted and evaluate the proposals within 2 months after the deadline of the call. The result can only be communicated officially by letter after the approval of the selection outcome by the concerned authorities, i.e. maximum 2 months after the deliberation.

When can the sojourn start (at the earliest)?

As soon as the scientific visa is delivered (for which the official letter confirming the fellowship is necessary), i.e. 5 to 6 months at the earliest after the deadline of the call.

Is it possible to be hosted in Belgium in a business company?

No. The candidate must integrate a research team in a public research institution (university, high school, Federal scientific institution or agreed research center).

Is it possible to come from a business company located in an eligible country?

Is it possible to extend the sojourn?

Exceptionally, BELSPO can grant an extension of up to 3 months of the sojourn upon reception of a motivation letter by the promoter detailing the work still to be done and accompanied by a report of the performed research as well as the agreement of the home institute.

For longer extensions a new full application has to be submitted to the jury at the time of a next selection.

Which are the relations between the researcher and BELSPO?

The fellowship holder has only a contractual relationship with the host institution. The contact persons at BELSPO remain however at the disposal if questions arise.

When should the reports be sent to BELSPO?

They are expected maximum up to 2 months after their term (mid-term and/or final).