



CLARIFICATION N°9

Call reference: EUBA-EFSA-2023-ENREL-01

Call title: Selection of hosting sites and fellows for EFSA's European Food Risk Assessment Fellowship (EU-FORA) Programme

Question 1: We have a question concerning the fellow's stay at the hosting site. We were wondering whether there are any directives from EFSA's site regarding remote work for the fellow during his stay at the hosting site? For example, if the fellow stays at the hosting site for 10 months and spends two to three days each week at the hosting site and works remotely the rest of the time, would that be okay? Provided that it is in line with the guidelines of the sending organisation and the hosting site? The total time present at the hosting organization would be in total more than 3 months.

Answer 1: As indicated in the Call for Proposals, Section 1.2.1 *Obligations and benefits of becoming a fellow hosting site*, the fellow's stay at the hosting site is set with a minimum of three (3) months, which can be indeed split into several shorter periods with no limitation as long as the total length of the stay remains within the stated range (minimum of 3 months). However, splitting the placement in shorter periods should not jeopardise its ultimate objective of enhancing networking and supporting learning by doing.

Please be reminded that in any case, the call seeks to identify consortia of hosting sites and fellow sending organisations (competent organisations under Art. 36 of the EFSA founding regulation) from two different EU countries, Norway or Iceland.

Question 2: I am considering to apply as a fellow for this call. I am in contact with [...] the hosting institute and we have an agreement on the main area of interest that I can be trained on. On the call I have seen that the program will start with a mandatory induction training that will take place in September 2024, at EFSA's premises in Parma, Italy. However, my home institute [...] has issued to all employees a prohibition of leave during the period of 28. August and 11. September due to an evaluation procedure. This prohibition includes business trips, holidays, trainings etc. This means that in case of acceptance, I would not be able to attend the whole induction training and would not be able to suggest someone from my home-institute to replace me, since this rule applies to all employees. Therefore, I wanted to ask if I am eligible to apply and –in case of acceptance- if there is a way to address my situation.

Answer 2: As indicated in the Call for Proposals, Section 1.2.4 *Obligations and benefits of becoming a fellow*, attendance to EU-FORA induction training and training modules is mandatory, and both hosting site and institution of origin shall facilitate this. The EU-FORA induction training 2024 is foreseen between 2nd and 20th September 2024. Although EFSA could accommodate short, duly justified absences, missing 8 days of the training would mean missing a great part of it, thus preventing proper acquisition of the knowledge and concepts required in this first phase of the fellowship.

Moreover, please note that a replacement of the fellow for short periods during the fellowship is not foreseen. Please check the Call for Proposals, Section 1.2.6 *Overall fellow selection and placement process* for further information on the potential drop-out of a fellow.

Question 3: I would like to know if it is possible to submit the application if one or more documents are not yet signed by the legal representative and finalize the submission at a later stage.

Answer 3: All documents required in the call for proposals under sections 2.2 Eligibility criteria, 2.3 Exclusion Criteria and 2.4 Selection Criteria needed to be signed by the legal representative, should be signed in advance of submitting the application.

In the event that a signature is missing from any of the documents submitted by the deadline of the call, this will be raised as a clarification during the evaluation phase.

Question 4: [...] Given that the proposed fellow will continue to receive her salary from the sending organization during the fellowship window and the uninterrupted period of approximately 8 months at the hosting site, we seek confirmation/clarification whether the EU-FORA project funds can be allocated to cover both her sending organization salary and daily allowances while being at the hosting site for the duration of fellows mission. The travel and accommodation expenses will be covered as per the grant principles.

In the grant principles outlined in the call for proposals, page 9, section 1.2.3, it is written:

"The fellow's employer must continue to pay their salary, to maintain their administrative status throughout the period of fellowship, and to inform EFSA of any change in the fellow's status in this regard."

[...]

"The fellow's employer must also pay all travel and accommodation expenses related to their physical presence at the hosting site and participation in the work programme (Footnote: In line with the travel and accommodation reimbursement rules of the sending organisation.)".

Answer 4: Yes, the grant can be used to cover all those expenses since EFSA does not require justification of costs or determine how the money grant must be split between both organisations.