



CLARIFICATIONS 1 TO 9

Call reference: EUBA-EFSA-2026-ENREL-01

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

Question 1: The first question is relative to the eligibility of a fellow. The call says that "*the fellow must be a staff member of or have a working relationship with a competent organisation under Art. 36 of EFSA's founding regulation (sending organisation); they must have worked for this organisation under a permanent or contract basis for at least 12 months before their fellowship and shall remain in the service of that employer throughout the period of fellowship. The fellow must not have been a fellow in past editions of the EU-FORA Programme.*" If there is a fellow, who has worked in the sending organization during September 2021 to May 2023 (contract of 21 months) and then stopped (June 2023 to August 2026), and the fellow will sign a new contract again in September 2026 to September 2027 (contract of 12 months), then the fellow is eligible? or should have a contract exactly before the fellowship (i.e., contract September 2025 to September 2027 to cover 12 months before and 12 months after the fellowship)?

Answer: As indicated in Section 2.4.B Professional and operational capacity, requirement No. 4, The fellow must be a staff member of or have a working relationship with a competent organisation under Art. 36 of EFSA's founding regulation (sending organisation) for at least 12 months before their fellowship and shall remain in the service of that employer throughout the period of fellowship. While continuity of 12 months in this working relationship is needed, it does not necessarily need to be assured by the same contract.

Please also note that EFSA may request to submit original supporting documents proving this working relationship in the course of the fellowship.

Therefore, to meet requirement No. 4, the fellow should have a working relationship with the fellow sending organisation for a minimum of 12 months before 1st September 2026, date of start of the fellowship, and remain at the service of that same employer minimum until the end of the fellowship (i.e. 31st August 2027). Kindly note that, as indicated in Section 1.3.2 Obligations of a fellow sending organisation, the fellow's employer must inform EFSA of any change in the fellow's status in this regard.

Question 2: The second question is relative to the role of the organizations and the submission of a proposal, if the first organization acts as a fellow hosting (this organization also submits the final proposal) and the other as a fellow sending organization, it is possible these organization to have the opposite role at the same time for the same submitted proposal (because the concept of the proposal is the same), i.e., organisation 1 as host and sending, and organisation 2 as sending and host, respectively? or these organizations should apply a different proposal with different concept and roles? If the first is possible (i.e., both organizations to have both roles) then which organization submits the proposal?

Answer: 2. As indicated in Section 1.3.5 Accumulation of roles, Competent organisations may undertake different and accumulated roles in the participation of the EU-FORA programme. They can apply to become a fellow hosting site and/or send fellows to participate in the programme under the same Call. However, please note that as pointed out in Section 1.10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, the applicant (organisation submitting the proposal to EFSA) is the leading entity of the consortium



and the hosting site. Therefore, if a same organisation applies as hosting site and fellow sending organisation, this needs to be done through the submission of two different proposals; one of which will be submitted by that organisation in its role of hosting site and leading entity of the consortium; and the other one, by their counterpart, the other organisation acting as hosting site and leading entity of the consortium.

Question 3: According to the call documents and the FAQ, the €55,000 grant is transferred entirely to the hosting organisation. In contrast, the sending organisation may receive very little or no financial compensation, depending on the internal agreement between the two institutions.

My question concerns the fellow's salary coverage. As fellows remain staff members of their sending organisation for the entire 12-month period, how do sending organisations typically manage the fact that they must continue paying the fellow's salary? At the same time, the grant funds are allocated primarily to the host?

Answer: As indicated in the Call for Proposals, section 1.8.1 Direct Agreement, the total amount of the EFSA grant intends to support the costs incurred by the fellow sending organisation by releasing an employee of their tasks while they remain a staff member of the institution, as well as the costs derived from the payment of fellow expenses for physical attendance at hosting site. Moreover, the sum is intended to compensate the costs of supervision by the hosting site. Finally, the sum will serve to contribute to the administrative costs associated to the signature and implementation of the Programme by both organisations.

The budget amount (€ 55,000) is intended to support all costs of both the fellow sending organisation and the hosting site, and EFSA does not prescribe how the grant should be divided between the two organisations. Such decision is entirely at the discretion of the consortium, but EFSA reminds that payment of the grant will only be made to the coordinator (fellow hosting site) and it is their responsibility to transfer the agreed proportion of the funds to the fellow sending organisation in due time.

Question 4: Is there an age or time limit after obtaining a doctorate for fellows for EU-FORA (call EUBA-EFSA-2026-ENREL-01)? I couldn't find this information on the website—maybe I overlooked it. We have a partner for the consortium and want to assess whether we can only be a host institution or whether our employees can be fellows.

Answer: Kindly note there is no age limit for participation in the EU-FORA Programme. However we invite you to thoroughly check Section 2.4.B Professional and operational capacity of the Call; namely requirement No. 7, where it is stated that the fellow must have a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 15 years of experience in performing scientific work or tasks related to food safety before their fellowship, understanding 'food safety' as a comprehensive expression including risk assessment, risk management and risk communication activities in any of the fields under EFSA's remit.

Question 5: However, we are uncertain whether Switzerland is eligible to participate in this Initiative. Could you kindly provide clarification on this matter?

Answer: Only [competent organisations](#), based on designations by Member States, are eligible to apply for a call. The competent organisations are based in EU countries, Norway or Iceland. Switzerland is not among these countries.

Question 6: My administration is asking for the *mandate template (provided by EFSA)* mentioned on page 15 of the call:



"Partners do not sign the grant agreement directly but instead sign a mandate (template provided by EFSA) authorising the applicant to sign the grant agreement and any future amendments on their behalf."

Answer: The mandate ('Accession forms') is annex 3 of the Draft Grant Agreement published with the Call for proposals in the Funding and Tender portal.

Question 7: We have received an inquiry from a research group interested in submitting an EU-FORA application for a promising young researcher.

This researcher will be hired by the organisation starting on January 1, 2026, for a period of two years, funded by a European project.

Upon hearing about the EU-FORA grants, this group saw a great training opportunity for the young researcher and wondered if it would be possible to use part of the funds allocated to the EU-FORA project to cover her salary expenses, that is, if she could be hired directly by EU-FORA, temporarily leaving the European project.

Answer: As indicated in Section 1.8.1 Direct Agreement of the Call for Proposals, the total amount of the EFSA grant (€ 55,000) intends to support the costs incurred by the fellow sending organisation by releasing an employee of their tasks while they remain a staff member of the institution, as well as the costs derived from the payment of fellow expenses for physical attendance at hosting site. Moreover, the sum is intended to compensate the costs of supervision by the hosting site. Finally, the sum will serve to contribute to the administrative costs associated to the signature and implementation of the Programme by both organisations. The budget amount (€ 55,000) is intended to support all costs of both the fellow sending organisation and the hosting site, and EFSA does not prescribe how the grant should be divided between the two organisations. Evidence of actual costs incurred by both parties in the consortium are not required.

Moreover, as indicated in Section 1.3.2 Obligations of a fellow sending organisation, 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.

Finally, in order to meet requirement No. 4 of the Selection criteria (Section 2.4.B Professional and operational capacity), the fellow must have worked or had a working relationship with the fellow sending organisation, under a permanent or contract basis, for at least 12 months before their fellowship (i.e. for at least 12 continued months before 1st September 2026) and shall remain in the service of that employer throughout the period of fellowship.

Question 8: Following up on the question just done in the Q&A session about EU-FORA: *what categories of early-mid research fellows can apply?* You kindly and rightly answered what is reported in the call and repeated in the FAQ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/engage/fellowship>: Research fellows from ex art 36 organisations can apply if they meet the selection criteria: min 3 years of experience and max 15 years, min B2 level of English, food safety (comprehending risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication).

"Identified fellows must be professionals in food safety working at a competent organisation (Art. 36 organisation) for a minimum of 12 months, with a full university degree in a relevant area and a good knowledge of English language (at least B2 level according to CEFR), and a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of 15 years of experience in performing scientific work or tasks related to food safety before their fellowship."

Further questions are:



- In the EU/Italian categories of research fellows, does it mean that both personnel with a fixed term position and junior categories with a temporary contract may apply?
- How might the EU-FORA grant be included in the terms of the researchers' ongoing contracts?

Answer:

- Identified fellows must meet criteria 4 to 7 indicated in Section 2.4B Professional and operational capacity of the Call for proposals. Moreover, as indicated in Section 1.3.2 Obligations of a fellow sending organisation, the fellow's employer must continue to pay their salary, maintain their administrative status throughout the period of fellowship, and inform EFSA of any change in the fellow's status in this regard; i.e. Fellows must keep their administrative status and salary during EUFORA and they must keep their working relationship of the fellow sending organisation. As long as the fellow and the fellow sending organisation meet the requirements to apply, the actual type of contract is not relevant for EFSA.
- As indicated in Section 1.8.1 Direct Agreement, EFSA's grant amount of 55,000€ is intended to support all costs of both the fellow sending organisation and the hosting site, and EFSA does not prescribe how the grant should be divided between the two organisations. Such decision is entirely at the discretion of the consortium, but EFSA reminds that payment of the grant will only be made to the coordinator (fellow hosting site) and it is their responsibility to transfer the agreed proportion of the funds to the fellow sending organisation in due time. **Evidence of actual costs incurred by both parties in the consortium are not required.** The total amount of the EFSA grant intends to support the costs incurred by the fellow sending organisation by releasing an employee of their tasks while they remain a staff member of the institution, as well as the costs derived from the payment of fellow expenses for physical attendance at hosting site. Moreover, the sum is intended to compensate the costs of supervision by the hosting site. Finally, the sum will serve to contribute to the administrative costs associated to the signature and implementation of the Programme by both organisations.

Question 9: As regards the EU-FORA call, hosting sites, can different mini-projects not listed in Appendix A of the call be proposed?

Answer: As indicated in Section 1.3.1 Obligations of a fellow hosting site, applicant organisations may opt for a work programme that includes in whole or in part one or more of the topics listed in Appendix A. Please note, however, that using the topics of the list is not mandatory. Hence, including (or not) a topic from the list in the proposed work programme will not affect the way that the proposal will be evaluated, and will have no impact on EFSA's financial contribution or any of the project's implementation modalities. Therefore, applicants can propose any topic for the training of the identified fellow, always taking into consideration the criteria in Section 2.5 Award Criteria and that the focus of the EU-FORA fellowship programme targets activities falling within EFSA's remit.