



European Association
for Cancer Research

EACR-AstraZeneca Postdoctoral Fellowships

Programme Guidelines

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EACR-AstraZeneca Postdoctoral Fellowships are awarded for a period of up to three years and support excellent postdoctoral researchers in laboratories throughout Europe.

The goals of the programme are:

- to support the career development of outstanding EACR early career members.
- to train the next generation of scientists engaged in innovative research in areas where AstraZeneca has demonstrated leadership through its pipeline and research programs.
- to build research collaborations between the EACR, institutions and AstraZeneca in core therapeutic areas to support development of the pipeline.

Measures of success:

- High impact publications describing innovative additions to the field
- Short and long-term satisfaction with the programme
- Career development of Fellows
- Continued academic interactions with the fellow and / or academic supervisors and AstraZeneca

Fellowship Programme

The submission of Proposals for an EACR-AstraZeneca Postdoctoral Fellowship is via an online application system on the EACR website www.eacr.org. Applications are accepted in line with the published timeline.

Eligibility

Applications are accepted from candidates who meet the following criteria:

- Applicants must be an EACR Early Career Member* and must still meet the criteria for that category of membership at the time of application as described on the [EACR website](#). If membership is through one of the EACR's associated National Societies, applicants are eligible if they match the requirements of the Early Career membership categories.
- Applicants must work actively and currently in cancer research, for example in academia, in industry or as a clinician or physician scientist.
- Applicants can only submit one application to each call, but can submit applications to more than one call.

**Exceptions to this rule are made for applicants with career breaks during the relevant period due to parental leave in which case the time of the career break will not be counted. Additional exceptions might be made on a case-by-case basis for extraordinary personal circumstances.*

Publications

Applicants must have had at least one first (or joint first) author primary research paper published in an international peer reviewed journal at the time of application. Papers must be published in English.

Abstracts of presentations at conferences and review articles should not be listed as publications.

Publication updates once the selection process has started are not allowed.

Mobility

Fellows must be based at a European academic institution for the duration of their Fellowship. A placement of up to one year at an AstraZeneca site (Covid restrictions permitting) may be arranged by mutual agreement if it is felt to be of benefit to the project and the Fellow. Fellows will be responsible for any costs associated with a placement or visit to AstraZeneca, including travel and accommodation.

Industrial research laboratories and applied projects

- Applications to work in an industrial or for-profit research laboratory will not be considered.
- Projects with an aim to develop an application, commercial product or process, or a device may be considered if there is a fundamental biology question behind the project to be answered. For instance, development of technologies that enable biological discovery and/or include biomarkers may be eligible for funding.

Application process

EACR Early Career Members will be invited to submit an outline project proposal following an announcement in EACR's News Bulletin and on its website.

Proposed research projects must:

- be basic and/or translational in nature
- have direct applicability and relevance to at least one of breast, bladder, lung, prostate, ovarian or paediatric cancer.

Projects should focus on one of the following research areas:

- Cell Therapy
- Immunotherapy
- Tumour drivers and resistance

- Mechanisms of sensitivity / resistance to PARP inhibitors and other DNA Damage Response inhibitors
- Epigenetics
- Haematology
- Mechanisms of sensitivity and resistance to antibody drug conjugates

Applications and supporting documentation are only accepted via the EACR online application system.

- Applications must be written in English and no special formatting is allowed.
- No application can be completed without all the information required including references and an acceptance letter from the host institution.
- Once the application enters the evaluation process, no further changes are allowed.
- Changes in address or contact email that occur after submission of an application should be notified to the Postdoctoral Fellowships Officer.

Stage 1 Proposed Work: Outline Proposal

- Project Title
- Summary and significance of the proposed research
- Maximum 1500 words project including:
 - Project aims and objectives
 - The oncology question to be addressed
 - Benefits of working with AstraZeneca
 - Which AstraZeneca compounds / drugs will be used, if any
 - Brief methodology
 - Expected results
 - Dissemination plan
- Proposed start date of the Fellowship
- Proposed duration of the Project (up to three years)

Stage 2 Proposed Work: Full Proposal *(for shortlisted applications only)*

- Full proposal for research at the receiving institute. Maximum 3000 words, including:
 - Background
 - Hypothesis and aims
 - Methodology
 - Contingency plans
 - Dissemination plan

Selection Process










The EACR will establish an independent Fellowship Review Panel. The primary selection criteria to be applied by the Panel are scientific excellence of the candidate, the project and the suitability of the host laboratory. Aspects considered in particular are:


- Scientific achievements of the applicant
- Quality, scope, novelty and significance of the proposed research
- Suitability of the host laboratory for the proposed research project
- Letter of support from the host institution
- Referees' comments
- Potential impact on the applicant's career

Panel members will individually score applications at both stages of the process. All applications will be considered by a minimum of three Panel members. The whole Panel will consider the individual scores and agree final rankings.

Timeline

Reasonable efforts will be made to adhere to this timeline.

Duration	Action
14 February 2022	Outline proposal submission deadline
1 Week 	Pre-screening. There will be a 1 week pre-screening period when applications will be checked to ensure eligibility requirements are met. All applicants, eligible or not, will receive an acknowledgement e-mail during this period.
3 Weeks 	Panel Review Completed outline proposal applications will be sent to the Review Panel for scoring and the agreement of final rankings.
5 Weeks 	AstraZeneca Review Top-ranking applications will be sent to AstraZeneca for review and, where suitable, an initial identification of a Supervisor. If a project is not suitable, AstraZeneca will establish a dialogue with the Review Panel. Confirmation of Supervisor Confirmation by AstraZeneca of a Supervisor for each successful proposal.
1 Week 	<u>All applicants</u> will be informed of the outcome of the first stage review by email. Successful applicants will be requested to submit a full proposal.
9 Weeks 	Period allocated for preparation and submission of full proposals.
27 June 2022	Full proposal submission deadline
3 Weeks 	Panel Review Completed full proposals will be sent to the Review Panel and the agreement of final rankings by the Panel Chair.
2 Weeks 	Rankings will be provided to AstraZeneca and Fellowships awarded according to the number to be funded, starting with the top-ranked. AstraZeneca Supervisors will be allocated to each successful application.
1 Week 	All applicants are officially informed of the outcome by email.
1 Week 	Deadline for successful applicants to accept the EACR-AstraZeneca Postdoctoral Fellowship Award(s)

8 Weeks 	Negotiations of Contracts.
October 2022	Start date of Fellowship(s) <i>estimated</i>
Year 1 six monthly reports	Submission of Year One Reports
Year 2 six monthly reports	Submission of Year Two Reports
Year 3 six monthly reports	Submission of Final Reports

Benefits

Funding

Fellowships are awarded for a period of 36 months although shorter durations can be requested. AstraZeneca provides funds to the host institution to cover the cost of an employment contract to be issued by the host institution to the awardee. Funding will cover the salary of the awardee (the mid-point postdoctoral researcher salary at the host institution or €70,000, whichever is lower), the employer's costs and a 25% overhead fee to be used at the employer's discretion.

The transfer of funds and their use is regulated by a Project Agreement that will be signed by both AstraZeneca and the Host Institution.

The Fellow agrees to provide reports to the EACR on request.

EACR-AstraZeneca Postdoctoral Fellows' Network

Fellows will be invited to join a network of EACR-AstraZeneca fellows for informal networking and advice. Fellows are invited to register for the annual EACR Congress which may take place either in-person or virtually. This event will bring Fellows and funders together in a friendly atmosphere. Fellows are asked to present their research, share experiences, and establish new collaborations and contacts. It is also an opportunity to meet the EACR staff and give feedback and suggestions on the programme.

Fellowship Terms and Conditions

The Fellow's host institution and AstraZeneca will develop a written Project Agreement with mutually agreed terms including intellectual property arrangements.

Fellowships are awarded to individuals. However, as the selection process also takes into consideration the specific research project proposed by the applicant and the suitability of the host laboratory, substantial changes to the proposed project or moving to a different host laboratory will result in the termination of the Fellowship.