

# ERS Clinical Training Fellowship

## Rules and Regulations

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## **1. General description and aims**

### ***1.1. General description***

- a. ERS clinical training fellowships enable members in the early stages of their career in respiratory medicine to visit a host institution in a European country other than their own, with the aim of learning a skill or procedure not available in their home institution. The medical training should benefit the home institution when the applicant returns there, and ultimately where possible the fellowship recipient should try and incorporate the newly acquired skill or procedure back into daily practice.
- b. ERS clinical training fellowships are not granted for undergraduate studies, workshops, courses, lectures, meetings, conferences, congresses or for visiting institutions without a clear training plan to be completed.

### ***1.2. Aims***

The clinical training fellowship programme aims to:

- Promote training in respiratory medicine for all health care providers with patients suffering from respiratory diseases or techniques to diagnose, treat or follow-up such patients. ERS does not intend to restrict the applications to the discipline of medicine only.
- Support the exchange of members actively involved in respiratory medicine.
- Contribute to the transfer and implementation of new techniques or methodologies.
- Stimulate career development in the area of respiratory medicine.
- Support new capacity and knowledge building in countries where there is a training gap.

## **2. Eligibility criteria**

### ***2.1. Recipient profile***

- a. Candidates should be qualified clinicians or healthcare professionals currently employed in respiratory medical practice. They must possess appropriate scientific, medical and/or professional qualifications and experience.
- b. ERS does not apply an upper age limit on candidates. Instead, priority is given to applicants in the early stages of their career.
- c. Candidates must be fluent in a language that permits effective communication at the host institution.
- d. Candidates must have an ERS membership at the time of application. Find out more about how to become an ERS member: [www.ersnet.org/membership](http://www.ersnet.org/membership).

### ***2.2. Mobility scheme***

ERS clinical training fellowships are intended for training in a foreign country in Europe. Exchanges between two units within the same country are not allowed unless there is a strong mobility justification (i.e. distance factor). ERS will make a decision on a case by case basis.

### ***2.3. Mandatory return to the Home Institution***

- a. On completion of the fellowship, applicants must return to their home institution, the goal being to directly apply the acquired skills back at their workplace.
- b. Candidates must have a clear formal connection (employment, under staff payroll, PhD studentship, etc.) to their home institution, to which they will return to at the end of the fellowship. Candidates can also be self-employed.
- c. The ERS will only accept applications stating that the competences to be acquired at the host institution are not available at the home institution.

### ***2.4. Extension of a previous stay supported by other funds***

- a. In general, ERS Fellowships should not be used to extend a previous stay at a host institution or in the same host country. Candidates should not have been already at the host institution for more than 3 months at the time of application.
- b. Applicants should inform the ERS about the success or challenges of the earlier stay. A description of the new added value in terms of skills and techniques to be acquired should be included, as well as a clear statement of the expected new benefits.

### ***2.5. Previous ERS clinical training fellowship recipients***

- a. Applicants who have already been awarded two ERS fellowships in the past are not eligible.
- b. Candidates having received an ERS clinical training fellowship in the past are eligible to reapply for this programme provided that they have fulfilled all responsibilities as fellowship recipients.
- c. Applications by past ERS clinical training fellowship recipients will be considered in competition with any other new application on the basis of merit. These should not be similar to the previously granted fellowship.

## **3. Responsibility of fellowship recipients**

### ***3.1. Before selection***

It is the responsibility of applicants to identify a skill or procedure existing in a potential host institution that can be transferred to the home institution. It is also their responsibility to identify fellowship supervisors in the respective institutions. ERS does not prospect for these.

### ***3.2. Full-time commitment***

The fellowship is to be carried out in a full time basis (100% working time appointment at the host institution dedicated to work on the suggested fellowship work plan). The fellowship recipient may not be engaged in any paid or salaried activities other than those related to the ERS training plan during the course of their fellowship. ERS fellowship recipients are encouraged to engage in teaching, discussion and similar activities of the host institution.

### ***3.3. Insurance and taxes***

- a. ERS does not recognise recipients of its fellowships as agents or employees of ERS and accepts no liability in respect of any of their actions or activities or in respect to their health or safety. It is the responsibility of the fellowship recipient and the host supervisor to find a mutual agreement on the nature, in terms of status, of the fellowship recipient's appointment during the fellowship at the host institution.
- b. Fellowship recipients are not insured by ERS against medical expenses for themselves or their families; neither are they insured for accidents during their travel to and from the host institution. Fellowship recipients are encouraged to ensure that they, their families and the institutions which receive them, are fully covered by the necessary insurances. It is the sole responsibility of the recipient of a fellowship to ensure that he/she is covered under a social security scheme providing protection at least equivalent to those of local trainees holding a similar position.
- c. ERS is an international non-governmental organisation whose fellowships are not automatically endowed with any particular tax privileges. It is the sole responsibility of the fellowship recipient to pay any tax which may be levied upon him/her by the appropriate national authority. ERS is not responsible for any tax issue that may arise either in the home or in the host country and any taxes have to come out of the fellowship.

### ***3.4. Unexpected event or work plan change***

- a. The ERS clinical training fellowship should be carried out exclusively as outlined in the fellowship agreement and may not be amended.
- b. ERS needs to be notified of any event or circumstance which might affect the implementation of the fellowship or is likely to have an effect on the performance of the fellowship. ERS must be made aware of fellowships that are terminated prematurely, the fellowship recipient will be responsible to reimburse the appropriate funds.
- c. If there are any problems, the fellowship recipient has the possibility of reporting these to ERS, who in such cases will contact the host in order to try to solve the problems. In extreme circumstances ERS may decide to prematurely terminate the fellowship.
- d. Any infringement of the conditions contained in this document will result in the withdrawal of an application from the selection process or the cancellation of funds already transferred.

### ***3.5. Reporting***

- a. Within 3 months of the end of the fellowship, the fellowship recipient is expected to submit an end-of-training report carrying the endorsement of the host supervisor and a completed ERS fellowship questionnaire.
- b. If the fellowship lasts more than 3 months, the fellowship recipient is expected to fill in a short questionnaire halfway of the training period abroad.
- c. The issuing of a fellowship certificate is conditional on the fulfilment of the abovementioned reporting commitments.

### ***3.6. Publications***

- a. Any publication or outcome related to the fellowship must acknowledge the ERS support.

- b. Publication of an article in the official journals of the society, in particular in Breathe, is encouraged.

#### **4. Role of the home institution**

- a. The home institution must confirm that the skills or procedures to be acquired at the host institution are not available at the home institution and that they are relevant for medical practice.
- b. The home institution will allow the successful candidate to be absent during the training period abroad and will maintain her/his position so that s/he can complete the fellowship by implementing the new skills or procedures once back at the home institution.
- c. The home institution commits to providing facilities, funds and resources to the fellowship recipient upon return in order to enable her/him to implement the new skills or procedures back at the home institution according to the work plan agreed.
- d. A supervisor of the successful candidate at the home institution will serve as home supervisor by monitoring the progress of the fellowship and being able to act on behalf of the home institution in any matters related to the fellowship.

#### **5. Role of the host institution**

- a. When applying, candidates must already hold an agreement with the host institution where the fellowship will be carried out.
- b. Fellowships are conditional on the availability of appropriate infrastructure, facilities, resources and funds to carry out the training at the host institution. The quality of the selected host institution and its adequacy in relation to the suggested training are important criteria which will be assessed during the reviewing and selection procedure of applications.
- c. The host institution will be requested to ensure the fulfilment of both practical and training aspects which are relevant:
  - a. prior to the fellowship (administrative requirements for admission),
  - b. at the beginning (housing, safety),
  - c. during the fulfilment of the fellowship (training sessions, regular meetings, evaluations) and
  - d. during the follow-up of the fellowship (reporting).
- d. The host supervisor identified by the applicant must be able to act on behalf of the host institution in any matters related to the fellowship and will monitor the progress of the fellowship according to the work plan agreed. The host supervisor will be entitled to accept only one fellowship candidate per round.
- e. The host institution is requested to assist the successful candidate in all matters related to visa requirements, housing, opening a bank account, taxation issues, etc.
- f. The host supervisor is requested to communicate to ERS the arrival of the fellow to the home institution. This is a requirement for the funding of the fellowship recipient by ERS.
- g. Within 3 months of the end of the fellowship, the host supervisor is expected to submit an end-of-training report and a completed ERS fellowship questionnaire.
- h. If the fellowship lasts more than 3 months, the host supervisor is also expected to fill in a short questionnaire halfway of the training period.

## 6. Application and selection process

### 6.1. General information on submission

- a. Applications and all supporting documents must be submitted in English and online using the following link: <http://forms.ersnet.org/clinical-training-fellowship>
- b. Applications having been previously rejected may be resubmitted; they should where possible be improved.

### 6.2. Timeline

#### Application deadline

- a. Clinical training fellowships are granted biannually. The deadline for submission of applications is 1 February and 1 July each year. Any postponement of these deadlines will be announced on the Fellowship webpage: [www.ersnet.org/ctf](http://www.ersnet.org/ctf).

#### Start date

- b. The fellowship should be started within 1 year from the positive notification date at the latest. The start date of the fellowship cannot be set earlier than July for applications submitted in February. For applications submitted in July the start date of the fellowship cannot be set earlier than December.
- c. The start date should allow for sufficient time after the expected date of the funding decision for the successful candidate to complete travel, visa, and housing formalities.
- d. Fellowships are not granted in retrospect for already fully or partly carried out training.

#### Duration of the fellowship

- e. ERS clinical training fellowships are intended for periods up to 6 months.
- f. The training outlined in the fellowship application is to be carried out in a continuous time period and may not be split nor reduced. It is critical that the training plan is realistic and that it is feasible to be completed within the projected time frame.
- g. The ERS Education Council reserves the right to reduce this period depending on the content of the submitted working plan.
- h. The duration of the fellowship should not be changed without approval of ERS. If any reduction is accepted by ERS, the grant amount will be reduced accordingly.

#### Selection notification

- i. Applicants can expect a decision in the second week of June for applications submitted in February and in the second week of November for applications submitted in July.

### 6.3. Required documents

- a. The application files to be uploaded online in PDF format are the following:
  - i. Candidate's short curriculum vitae (2 pages maximum).
  - ii. Candidate's learning path (2 pages maximum) detailing the postgraduate courses followed and planned activities after the fellowship. It should explain how the fellowship would fit as a practical implementation of the learning path.
  - iii. Work plan description (5 pages maximum, including references, font size 12pts Times New Roman or Arial). This is the most important component of the application. It should be prepared by the applicant and have the approval of the home and host supervisors. It should provide details on the rationale of the work plan, a clear

training plan abroad and a description of the work plan back home outlining also evidence of resources enabling the acquisition and direct transfer of the new skills or procedures.

- iv. Home supervisor's release form. It should confirm the relevance of and the support of the proposed work plan. It should attest the proficiency of the applicant in the working language at the proposed host institution. It should authorise the applicant's leave of absence during the planned training period and indicate that, if successful, a position will be open to the applicant upon completion of the fellowship. It must include a statement confirming that facilities, funds and resources will be made available to the fellowship recipient upon return, in order to enable him/her to transfer the newly acquired skills back at the Home Institution. For the convenience of applicants, a template is available on the fellowship webpage: [www.ersnet.org/ctf](http://www.ersnet.org/ctf).
- v. Statement on salary status during the ERS fellowship by the home supervisor.
- vi. Host supervisor's acceptance form. It should state the interest in the candidate and confirm that operational funds, facilities and resources are available for the training. It should also attest the host supervisor's commitment to the work plan as outlined in the application and ensure supervision. It should explicitly state in which role the candidate will work (observer, intern, actively working with patients etc) and that all legal and administrative requirements to work in this position are met. For the convenience of applicants, a template is available on the fellowship webpage: [www.ersnet.org/ctf](http://www.ersnet.org/ctf).
- vii. Host supervisor's training background (2 pages maximum) detailing the educational activities performed by the host supervisor during her/his career.
- viii. Statement on salary status during the ERS fellowship by the host supervisor.
- ix. Scanned candidate's ID digital photo in high resolution (300 dpi).
- x. Scanned copy of candidate's passport or ID
- xi. Scanned copy of candidate's highest degree (PhD, MD, MSc, BSc etc.).
- b. Compliance with the required length of application documents is mandatory. Applicants are responsible for verifying that the home and host supervisors' files are in compliance with the above.
- c. The information provided by applicants in the online application form will automatically be compiled and transmitted to ERS reviewers. Therefore, applicants should be aware that fellowship are awarded based on the quality of information provided.

#### **6.4. Selection process**

- a. The clinical training fellowships are under the responsibility of the ERS Education Council and final decision is the responsibility of the ERS Executive Committee following the recommendations of the Education Council.
- b. Applications will be reviewed by the ERS Medical Education Working Group and the ERS Education Council in a three-step process. In a first step, each application will be graded by the Medical Education Working Group members not having any conflicts of interest. In a second step, the results will be normalised and a shortlist established. The shortlisted applications will be sent to two reviewers specialised in the skill or procedure object of the application. Finally, the final ranking will be discussed by the Education Council.
- c. Reviewers' task and responsibility are to judge the quality, value, feasibility, etc. of the submitted work plan and supporting documents according to the following criteria:

- i. Merit of candidate (qualifications, training and professional background).
- ii. Relevance of the work plan (relevance to the respiratory field, added value of training, relation to the previous background and relevance to the career development, originality/innovativeness).
- iii. Quality of the training plan (needs, aims, objectives, methodology, work plan with schedule/timelines, milestones, etc.).
- iv. Added value of the host institution for the training.
- v. Quality of the work plan upon return to the home institution (availability of funds/facilities/resources to implement the new skill or procedure, projected value/benefits for the Home Institution, added value and feasibility of the transfer of the newly acquired skills, etc.).
- vi. The feasibility of achieving the fellowship goals within the set time period abroad.
- d. A review ranking list will result from the average grades for the criteria listed above. This ranking list will be submitted to ERS leadership for endorsement.
- e. The assessments are strictly confidential and cannot be divulged outside the ERS or to the candidates themselves.
- f. No distinction will be made between candidates on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion or political opinions.
- g. Appeals will not be considered unless formal mistakes have been made by ERS.

## 7. Grant

### 7.1. Calculation

- a. A fixed amount is calculated for each fellowship and is set as an ERS grant amount at the beginning of the training. The fellowship provides the recipient with a subsistence allowance to cover living costs and a flat rate for travelling expenses to the host institution. The fellowship is not intended to cover any other expenses.
- b. The subsistence rates are indicated per month in euros (depending on the country of the host institution), for a recipient not receiving any other income (salary, funding, travel grant, etc.). They are indicative and subject to change. They depend on the available yearly ERS fellowship budget and the variable inflation, exchange rates and the cost of living in the host country.

Table 1 - Subsistence rates 2016

	Austria	Belgium	Denmark	Finland	France	Germany	Greece	Ireland
rate	2800	2800	3400	3200	2800	2800	2374	3000
currency	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO

  

	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	UK	Other
rate	2750	2850	2500	2500	3200	3800	3000	2200
currency	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO	EURO

- c. A one off travel flat rate for covering travel costs between the home and host institutions will be granted: €200 for distances between the host and home institutions below 5,000km and €700 for distances above 5,000km. The fellowship does not provide the travel costs for the family of the fellowship recipient.



- d. ERS does not provide the fellowship recipients with support fees, any other contribution to the costs of the training or any other financial support to the social security and safety schemes.

## **7.2. Deductions**

- a. If the fellowship recipient is receiving income from the home/host institutions during his/her fellowship this amount will be deducted from the ERS monthly subsistence rate.
- b. The fellowships may not be financially supplemented by agencies other than the home or host institutions, or the recipients personally. Therefore they may not run concurrently with other awards, funds, grants, fellowships, etc. during the same time period and in relation with the same training.
- c. The financial supplements that are permitted to fellowship recipients, to be supplied by the home and/or host institutions without deduction on the ERS grant amount, are financial aid to cover the recipient's obligatory health and safety insurances, legal and social security insurances, pension schemes and child support in the home and host country.
- d. If the applicant is already in the country of the host institution, the travel flat rate will not be granted.

## **7.3 Payment schedule**

- a. Fellowship recipients have the option to receive €1,000 1 month before the start of the fellowship. This amount should be used to cover the travel and setup costs in the host country. This amount would be deducted from the total grant amount.
- b. Once the host supervisor send ERS a notification by e-mail to confirm the fellowship recipient's presence onsite, ERS will pay the rest of the fellowship grant if the fellowship lasts up to 3 months or 50% of the rest of the fellowship grant if the fellowship lasts more than 3 months. In this last case, the remaining 50% of the rest of the fellowship grant will be paid once the fellowship recipient and the host supervisor fill in a short form by the mid-term of the fellowship.