

1. Selection process

- **Application documents**

All information listed below is required to be filled in online (cf. "Full Proposal" application - Step2):

- **General information** (to be completed online)
 - **Personal data** and **current affiliation** of applicant
 - Mandatory complementary information: PhD related information, previous institution, career breaks, international exposure, planned host institution.
 - **Research project details**: Risk cluster, project title, start and end date, keywords, abstract, relevance of application to main risk, ethical issues.
 - **Names, institutions and email addresses of 2 referents**: Referents will be contacted to submit their reference letters (1 page max.). The applicant's Post-Doctoral advisor writes the first letter and the second letter has to be written by a different referent, preferably the applicant's previous advisor.
- **Application template** (upload completed template, PDF format, 4MB maximum)
 - **Research project and innovativeness** (5 pages max.): long term objectives and specific aims; progress beyond the state-of-the-art; innovative nature of the research proposed; proposal bibliographical references (1 page max.).
 - **Research plan** (7 pages max.): methodology incl. a description of the materials and methods or experimental strategies; work packages and tasks (1 page max.); Gantt chart; Budget (1/2 page max.); Short description of the host laboratory/group with 10 most relevant publications in the past 3 years (1 page max.); Short bio of the future supervisor of host institution with main publications (1 page max.).
 - **Impact of the research** (2 pages max.): contribution to a better understanding of important hazards and risks; impact on society/communities.
 - **Applicant**: Career Statement (1 page max.); Detailed CV, incl. participation to colloquia (2 pages max.); Extended list of the most relevant publications (2 pages max.); Other documentation (optional -5 pages max.).
- **Detailed step-by-step**

- **Step 1 – Registering and requesting a slot**

To apply for our schemes, academic institutions must be preregistered on our platform (<https://institution.axa-research.org/> - available mid-September 2016 at the latest). Institutions are invited to appoint a single point of contact ("Operational Contact") who will handle relations with the AXA Research Fund. **Preregistration is to be done at least 5 days before the opening of the campaign.**

Host institutions first indicate their interest in participating in the program, along with the number of fellows they wish to present. The AXA Research Fund reviews their profiles, and, depending on the available funding, allocates slots to the selected host institutions. The number of slots corresponds to the number of candidates the institution will be allowed to present.

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- **Step 2 – Application**

The Institution's operational contacts nominate their candidates by entering their names & email addresses online. Candidates are then invited by the European Science Foundation (ESF) to submit their research proposals and are provided with the necessary information to access the application form.

- **Step 3 – Rebuttal**

Candidates will have the opportunity to respond online to the ESF experts' pre-assessment of their applications before they are reviewed by the AXA Research Fund panels. The main purpose of the rebuttal is to provide applicants with the possibility to comment on any potential misinterpretations or misunderstandings that may have been made by the experts while initially assessing their proposals. This rebuttal step is strongly recommended.

- **Step 4 – Scientific assessment**

The evaluation of the scientific quality of research proposals is implemented in a fully independent manner by the European Science Foundation. The ESF will set up Review Panels (gathering between 45 and 55 members) in charge of assessing all proposals. Review Panels are composed of renowned scientists and scholars from all over the world with a broad view and knowledge across domains covered by their respective panel. Review Panel members are independently identified, invited and appointed by the ESF office to ensure a balanced coverage of disciplines and scientific cultures.

- **Step 5 – Public engagement interview**

Two AXA experts will, in parallel to the evaluation of the proposal, interview candidates during 20 minutes. Their role is to help the AXA Research Fund assess their ability to share their research project with a non-academic audience, in particular:

- Potential to act as a spokesperson in public debate;
- Popularization and pedagogical skills;
- Ability to highlight the value of the research project to society.

- **Step 6 – Selection & results publication**

The Scientific Board of the AXA Research Fund selects applications to be funded based on the scientific case, panels' assessments and communication skills (only if in favor of the candidate). If despite the above criteria the number of applications is above available grants, other criteria could be considered, such as focus countries, topic relevance, distance to risk or international mobility of the applicant.

As soon as the Board has taken its decision, the AXA Research Fund informs the Institution through the Institution's representative. Results of the campaign will also be made available online (<http://www.axa-research.org/>). In parallel, the announcement will also be reflected on the dedicated platforms for applicants and institutions, where the outcomes will be published.