

RULES AND REGULATIONS

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER FELLOWSHIP (CR – CHARGÉ·E DE RECHERCHES)

***ADOPTED BY
THE F.R.S.-FNRS BOARD OF TRUSTEES***

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CHAPTER I: SCOPE – NATURE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Article 1

The rules and regulations hereinafter are only applicable to holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher (CR – Chargé-e de recherches) fellowship of the Fund for Scientific Research – FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS).

CR applications must be submitted under Grants and Fellowships Call of the Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS (F.R.S.-FNRS).

Article 2

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher (CR) fellowship shall carry out a Postdoctoral-level research work in a university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium under the supervision of a promoter and a postdoctoral co-promoter (if any) from one of the institutions listed in Appendix 1.

The promoter must meet the following conditions altogether:

- Be permanently appointed¹ to an academic or scientific position or on probation in that university.
- This appointment must have a final and conclusive assent from the competent body to legitimize this appointment in accordance with the Law or the university regulations by the time of the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) at the latest.
- This academic or scientific position must be effective by the time of the starting date of the fellowship, i.e., by 1st October of the year of the Grants and Fellowships Call concerned at the latest.

If the promoter of a CR applicant who is appointed permanently accesses the legal age of retirement / becomes professor emeritus after the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) and before the end of the funding scheme in case of granting, the submission of the application shall be subject to prior approval by the Head of institution where the research will be carried out.

The promoter permanently appointed who will access the legal age of retirement / become professor emeritus by the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) is not eligible.

The researcher-promoter of a Ulysse Incentive Grant for Mobility in Scientific Research (MISU) who genuinely carries out the fellowship by the time of the starting date of the fellowship, i.e., by 1st October of the year of the Grants and Fellowships Call concerned at the latest, may be promoter of a CR applicant.

CHAPTER II: APPLICATION

Article 3

Applicants to a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship must have obtained the academic degree of Doctor after the defence of a thesis and issued by an academic institution at the latest by 1st May of the year of the Grants and Fellowships Call concerned.

¹ Does not include *logisticians*.

A copy of the PhD diploma, or a certificate of achievement if you have not been delivered your diploma yet, must be enclosed in the application file or sent to the F.R.S.-FNRS by 1st May of the year of the Grants and Fellowships Call concerned at the latest.

Article 4

Applicants to a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship must have obtained the academic degree as referred to in Article 3 for maximum 5 years. This term shall expire at the latest on the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) to validate applications.

The maximum period used to calculate eligibility based on the required academic seniority is extended by:

- 15 months per childbirth regardless of the number of children per delivery
- 12 months per child for whom the applicant is a parent² (as a legal parent, co-parent, adoptive mother or father, adoptive co-parent, or any other form of legal parenthood established by recognition or court decision) and whom the applicant did not give birth to;
- 12 months for applicants who have taken in one or more children at the same time as foster parents³, designated as such by the court, by an accredited placement service of the competent community, or by a community service responsible for youth protection (youth welfare services, Special Youth Assistance Committee), in the context of a long-term placement.

These extensions are cumulative.

Article 5

No applicant may apply more than three times for the same fellowship. **Starting from the 2027 Grants and Fellowships Call**, the number of applications for the same fellowship will be limited to two attempts instead of three.

Researchers who have been granted with a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship, regardless of its duration, can no longer apply for the same fellowship.

Article 6

The Grants and Fellowships Call is opened once a year and is published on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.

Only one application for a Postdoctoral Researcher (CR) fellowship can be submitted, in French or in English. It must only be submitted on [e-space](#), the online platform dedicated to the calls for proposals.

It is recommended to applicants who wish to have their application file assessed by [Scientific Commissions](#) dedicated to SEN (Exact and Natural Sciences) and SVS (Health and Life Sciences) fields, as well as the Scientific Commission SHS-2, to submit their application in English⁴.

² In case of multiple pregnancy, the non-birthing parent will have their eligibility extension capped at 12 months.

³ In the case of fostering siblings, the concerned parent will have their eligibility extension capped at 12 months.

⁴ Should the application file be submitted in French, the F.R.S.-FNRS may require the applicant to provide a translation in English for the purpose of conducting the [ex-ante evaluation](#).

All applications are submitted to a procedure including three successive electronic validations on the dates that will be indicated when the call is published:

- a. The validation by the applicant: it accounts as a confirmation that the applicant has submitted an application.
- b. The validation by the promoter selected pursuant to Article 2: the F.R.S.-FNRS transfers the application to promoters so that they give their approval for the submitted research project and confirm the accuracy of the data mentioned in the application file. The promoter may accept or refuse the application.
- c. The validation by the research administration (or Board of Education) of the university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium, to which the application file is transferred once promoters have given their consent. The academic authority may accept or refuse the application. The validation deadline set for the rectors puts a final end to the call for proposals.

Applications that have not been validated within the time-frame of the call cannot be taken into account.

No further change or modification to the proposal can be made after the validation deadline set for the applicant.

A mini-guide specifies the validation dates as well as the documents which must be included in the application.

CHAPTER III: ALLOCATION AND DURATION OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Article 7

The F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees shall decide on the allocation of Postdoctoral Researcher fellowships.

Article 8

For Postdoctoral Researcher fellowships (CR) recipients who obtained their fellowship before 2026.

The allocation of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship leads to a full-time employment contract between the F.R.S.-FNRS and the fellowship holder for a fixed term of 3 years.

For researchers from outside of the European Economic Area, the Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship can only be awarded if the F.R.S.-FNRS obtains a single permit for the researcher (unless they have been granted an exemption). In the event of an administrative delay in the single permit application, it will be possible to postpone the start of the fellowship for up to 6 months from the date of the granting decision.

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship may use the 3 years of their fellowship over a period of 6 years:

- if external funding is obtained in order to carry out postdoctoral research outside the French-speaking Community of Belgium ("Communauté Francophone de Belgique");
- if the researcher is the recipient of a MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie) postdoctoral funding, carried out in a university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium;
- subject to the approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS Board of trustees, any recipient of a "prestigious" postdoctoral funding, allocated personally to the recipient after an evaluation process by international scientists.

Disabled recipients of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship can achieve their fixed-term contract over a longer period of time on a part-time basis. The terms of this contract must have been agreed upon with the promoter and its length cannot exceed the equivalent of 3 years of fulltime work.

Disabled recipients of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship can spread their fixed-term contract over up to maximum 8 years:

- if external funding is obtained in order to carry out postdoctoral research outside the French-speaking Community of Belgium ("Communauté Francophone de Belgique");
- if the researcher is the recipient of a MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie) postdoctoral funding, carried out in a university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium;
- subject to the approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS Board of trustees, any recipient of a "prestigious" postdoctoral funding, allocated personally to the recipient after an evaluation process by international scientists.

For Postdoctoral Researcher fellowships (CR) recipients who obtained their fellowship from 2026 on.

The allocation of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship leads to a full-time employment contract between the F.R.S.-FNRS and the fellowship holder for a fixed term of 3 years.

For researchers from outside of the European Economic Area, the Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship can only be awarded if the F.R.S.-FNRS obtains a single permit for the researcher (unless they have been granted an exemption). In the event of an administrative delay in the single permit application, it will be possible to postpone the start of the fellowship for up to 6 months from the date of the granting decision.

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship may use the 3 years of their fellowship over a period of 6 years, thus pausing their fellowship for up to 3 years:

- if external funding is obtained in order to carry out postdoctoral research outside the French-speaking Community of Belgium ("Communauté Francophone de Belgique" - CFB);
- if the researcher is the recipient of a MSCA (Marie Skłodowska-Curie) postdoctoral funding, carried out in a university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB);
- subject to the approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS Board of trustees, any recipient of a "prestigious" postdoctoral funding, allocated personally to the recipient after an evaluation process by international scientists.

If the recipient of a Postdoctoral Fellowship, at the starting date of the fellowship (October 1st) is the recipient of another fellowship outside of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB) or has accepted another postdoctoral fellowship outside of the CFB, he or she may pause his Postdoctoral Fellowship for up to 1 year maximum.

If the holder of a Postdoctoral Fellowship, at the starting date of the fellowship (October 1st) is also the recipient of a prestigious fellowship (MSCA or other) in a CFB institution, he or she may pause their fellowship for as much as the remaining time of that prestigious fellowship.

If the holder of a Postdoctoral Fellowship, at the starting date of the fellowship (October 1st) has obtained a prestigious fellowship (MSCA or other) in a CFB institution, he or she may pause their fellowship for as long as the duration of that prestigious fellowship.

This type of suspension is included in the maximum of 3 years of suspension allowed by article 8 of the rules and regulations.

Holder of the fellowship that has not effectively started their fellowship in their institution before the end of the first year (from October 1st to September 30th of the year following the Board of trustee's decision to award this fellowship) or before the end of a prestigious fellowship as mentioned above, their contract will be terminated.

After the start of the fellowship, the holder must have been paid by the F.R.S-FNRS for at least 6 months in order to be eligible for a suspension of their fellowship.

Disabled recipients of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship can achieve their fixed-term contract over a longer period of time on a part-time basis. The terms of this contract must have been agreed upon with the promoter and its length cannot exceed the equivalent of 3 years of fulltime work.

The above suspension rules and regulations also apply to disabled holders. The holder may use the equivalent of their 3 years of fulltime fellowship over a period of 8 years.

CHAPTER IV: RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE FELLOWSHIP HOLDERS

Article 9

Any research project being funded must observe statutory provisions in force governing ethics.

Article 10

Postdoctoral Researchers are subordinated to the F.R.S.-FNRS Board of Trustees, which acts through its President and General Secretary of the F.R.S.-FNRS. They pledge to respect the rules and regulations in force within the Fund.

They must respect the discipline enforced by the academic authority of the institution where they work and observe its rules and regulations. As Research Fellows of the F.R.S.-FNRS, they are also required to adhere to the regulation on the property, protection and promotion of the results from the research carried out within the institution.

Article 11

Postdoctoral Researchers may not change the object of their research without the F.R.S.-FNRS authorisation.

Article 12

Postdoctoral Researchers may attend classes, supervise practical sessions or perform administrative tasks; however, they cannot devote more than eight hours per week to those activities. One hour dedicated to supervising practical sessions is equivalent to two hours dedicated to performing administrative tasks or two hours dedicated to attending classes.

Within the specified time frame of eight hours, they can also perform teaching tasks, which may not exceed two hours per week (60 hours per year). In this case, the F.R.S.-FNRS allows them to accept remuneration related to their teaching position. They can bear the title related to their teaching activities.

Article 13

Except for the provisions in Article 12, holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship may not be part of the scientific or academic staff of a university or an academic institution, and may not receive any remuneration or salary.

However, the F.R.S.-FNRS may upon request authorise them to receive full or part of the allowances that they may be entitled to have for research stays abroad.

Article 14

In order to encourage the participation of researchers from universities of the French-speaking Community of Belgium in ERC calls, by way of derogation from Article 2, the holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship who obtain an ERC Starting Grant (or ERC Consolidator Grant) can keep their CR fellowship until its full term and devote it either entirely or partially to their ERC project. The institution in which the research is carried out is responsible for making the necessary arrangements to ensure that the CR fellowship holder benefits from the conditions required by the ERC in terms of scientific independence, in compliance with Article 13. If such an ERC Grant is awarded, the CR fellowship holders must inform the F.R.S.-FNRS as soon as possible.

CR fellowship holders who devote their entire fellowship to an ERC project lose *de facto* the benefit of Article 12.

This derogation is only valid for beneficiaries of an ERC Starting Grant or ERC Consolidator Grant.

Article 15

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship receive an operating credit.

That credit can only be allocated if the holder genuinely carries out the fellowship.

Article 16

At the end of each academic year, holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship are required to send to the F.R.S.-FNRS a report on the scientific activities they have carried out along the year. This report is to be uploaded on their personal [e-space](#) page. The holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship must also send a copy to the Head of the institution where they carry out their research.

Article 17

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship shall mention in their publications, papers and reprinted/e-print alike that they have been Postdoctoral Researchers of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

Article 18

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship who wish to study or pursue their research abroad must give prior notice to the F.R.S.-FNRS on their personal [e-space](#) page at least 15 days before the actual date of departure.

For any stay, a prior agreement of the promoter must be sent to the F.R.S.-FNRS and uploaded on e-space.

In case of a long-term stay (90 days and more), an agreement of the Head of the institution where the Postdoctoral Researcher carries out their research must also be submitted to the F.R.S.-FNRS on e-space by the institution.

Article 19

Any change regarding the civil status, the family responsibility, the domicile or residence must be reported by the holder of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship on their personal [e-space](#) page, as soon as possible.

Article 20

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship shall inform the F.R.S.-FNRS of any temporary interruption or suspension of work as soon as they can and for any reason whatsoever.

Article 21

In case of illness or personal accident, a medical certificate attesting the starting date and the duration or extension of a period of professional incapacity must be submitted to the F.R.S.-FNRS within 48 hours following the beginning of the incapacity period. The promoter shall send a copy of the medical certificate to the relevant department of the institution where the Postdoctoral Researcher carries out their research.

Article 22

In case of work accident, the administrative staff of the F.R.S.-FNRS must be informed within 24 hours, by phone if necessary. The declaration of accident as well as the medical certificate reporting the accident must be sent to the Fund. The health department of the institution where the Postdoctoral Researcher carries out their research must be informed as well.

CHAPTER V: INTERRUPTIONS

Article 23

The Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship interrupted due to maternity, paternity or adoption leave can be extended for a duration equivalent to the duration of the interruption.

The Postdoctoral Researcher must request this extension at least a month before the fellowship expires. For researchers who are required to hold a single permit, this extension must be requested at least 3 months before the fellowship expires. The granting of this extension does not adversely affect the fixed-term nature of the fellowship.

Article 24

The Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship interrupted due to a prophylactic antenatal leave, prophylactic breastfeeding leave and breastfeeding leave for personal convenience can be extended for a duration equivalent to the duration of the interruption.

The Postdoctoral Researcher must request this extension at least a month before the fellowship expires. For researchers who are required to hold a single permit, this extension must be requested at least 3 months before the fellowship expires. This extension agreement does not adversely affect the fixed-term nature of the fellowship.

This extension will be granted upon reception of a medical certificate.

Prophylactic breastfeeding leave or breastfeeding leave for personal convenience cannot exceed 5 months from the day of the birth.

Article 25

The Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship interrupted due to parental leave can be extended for a duration equivalent to the duration of the interruption.

A parental leave request must contain a letter from the promoter defining the modalities of the leave (form and period...).

The Postdoctoral Researcher must request this extension at least a month before the fellowship expires. For researchers who are required to hold a single permit, this extension must be requested at least 3 months before the fellowship expires. This extension agreement does not adversely affect the fixed-term nature of the fellowship.

Article 26

For recipients who obtained their fellowship before 2026, the Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship interrupted for 30 days or more due to illness shall be extended for a period equal to that of the interruption.

For recipients who obtained their fellowship from 2026 on, the Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship interrupted for 30 days or more due to illness shall be extended for a period equal to that of the interruption. The 30 first days of the interruption, which are paid by the F.R.S.-FNRS, are not included in the extension of the fellowship.

This extension will be granted upon receipt of a medical certificate justifying the work incapacity for a period greater than 30 days.

The extension of the Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship will be effective when the researcher returns to work, by signing a formal contract amendment stating the new ending date of the fellowship. The researcher will be required to send it to the F.R.S.-FNRS for approval.

For researchers requiring a single permit, it will not be possible to grant an extension if the work incapacity is to end within the 3 months prior to the expiration of the fellowship.

Article 27

Should a single permit not be issued within the allotted time in the event of an extension of the period of employment, the said extension will not be granted. However, a new employment contract may be drawn up. It is conditioned by the obtention of a single permit, for the duration of the extension, provided that it is for a minimum of 30 days

CHAPTER VI: FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Article 28

Financial and social provisions are governed by specific rules and regulations.

CHAPTER VII: FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 29

Holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship may terminate their fellowship agreement at any time. They shall give a written notice of their decision to the F.R.S.-FNRS, their promoter and the Head of the institution where they have carried out their research programme.

Article 30

Only holders of a Postdoctoral Researcher fellowship whose disability has been recognized by the General Management for People with disabilities ("Direction Générale Personnes handicapées"), at the Social Security service, part of the Federal Public Service.

APPENDIX 1

Relevant institutions for the co-promoter

CR instrument

Grants and Fellowships Call

Institutions de rattachement co-promoteur-ice / Attached institutions for the co-promoter
Instrument Chargé-e de recherches / Postdoctoral Researcher Fellowship
(CR)

<p>Co-promoteur-ice d'une université CFB / Co-promoter of a CFB university</p>	<p>➤ Universités de la Communauté française de Belgique (CFB) Universities of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB)</p> <p>Université catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain) Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) Université de Liège (ULiège) Université de Mons (UMons) Université de Namur (UNamur)</p>
<p>Co-promoteur-ice (de régime linguistique francophone) attaché-e à l'une de ces institutions / French speaking co-promoter attached to one of these institutions</p>	<p>➤ École royale militaire (E.R.M.)</p> <p>➤ Établissements scientifiques fédéraux State Scientific Institutions</p> <p>Archives de l'État (AE) Institut d'Aéronomie spatiale de Belgique (I.A.S.) Institut royal météorologique de Belgique (I.R.M.) Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique (I.R.P.A.) Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique (I.R.S.N.B.) KBR (Bibliothèque royale de Belgique) Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale (M.R.A.C.) Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire (M.R.A.H.) Musées royaux des Beaux-arts de Belgique (M.R.B.A.B.) Observatoire royal de Belgique (O.R.B.)</p> <p>➤ Centre d'Étude de l'énergie Nucléaire (SCK-CEN) ➤ Centre wallon de Recherches agronomiques (CRA-W) ➤ LABIRIS ➤ Agence Jardin botanique de Meise ➤ Musée royal de Mariemont ➤ Sciensano</p>