



# SHORT-TERM FELLOWSHIPS

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**Call for proposals 2024: open throughout the year  
(no deadline)**

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Templates and FEA instructions are available at: [https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/wp-content/uploads/FEA\\_Instructions\\_2024.pdf](https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/wp-content/uploads/FEA_Instructions_2024.pdf)

## Foreword

Fondazione AIRC per la ricerca sul cancro ETS (AIRC) will fund Short-term Fellowships, for periods of **minimum one month and maximum three months**. The fellowships will support the career development of young scientists or physician scientists who wish to learn a new technique or acquire new skills. Fellowships may be used for short term visits to a cancer-focused laboratory or hospital (“Hosting Institution”) located outside of Italy or, when in Italy, in a different region from where the “Institution of origin” (current affiliation) is located.

AIRC Short-term Fellowships are meant to cover the costs due to mobility (such as travel expenses, accommodation) and health insurance, when needed, for applicants proposing to spend a period abroad.

The budget allocated to this program will be used to fund approved requests until money is available. There are no application deadlines; applications can be submitted throughout the year, until all available budget has been spent.

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## 1. Eligibility criteria for applicants

This Call is open to applicants of any nationality. At the time of submission, the following eligibility criteria must be met:

- Applicants must be 40 years old or younger;
- Applicant must hold a PhD or Specialty degree (“specializzazione area sanitaria”), or be enrolled in a PhD or Specialty program in scientific disciplines;
- Applicants must be working in the field of cancer research at a laboratory or hospital located in Italy;
- Applications must be submitted at least three months before the proposed starting date.

Furthermore, the following rules apply:

- Funds can be used for multiple separate trips to visit a single Hosting Institution. The total duration of all visits combined must not exceed three months; all visits must be completed within one year from the notification of the award;
- Successful applicants can be considered for a second AIRC Short-term Fellowship only after a period of at least two years from the date of the first award;
- Candidates whose application has not been approved cannot submit a new application for at least six months after the rejection date.

The following applications will not be considered:

- Applications to return to laboratories or clinics where the candidate had previous research experiences;

- Applications for visits that are already underway;
- Applications to visit laboratories or hospitals that can be reached by daily commuting;
- Applications from candidates with a permanent position and from AIRC individual grant holders.

**Applications from researchers who do not meet these requirements will be rejected.**

## 2. The Visit Program

Applications must include a detailed visit program with a clear relevance to cancer, agreed both with the head of the hosting lab and with the head of the lab of origin. It must explain the activity that will be undertaken at the Hosting Institution, describe how the AIRC Short-term Fellowship will broaden the scientific knowledge of the applicant and how the Institution of origin will benefit from the applicant's experience. In case of multiple separate visits at a single Hosting Institution, please add a cogent justification for your visit program.

Information related to the fellowship appointment (fellow's first and last name, Hosting Institution, visit program, amount granted) may be published on AIRC journal and websites, and on the website of any partner funder also contributing to the program. Fellow's contact data can be disclosed to third parties appointed by AIRC for engagement in AIRC institutional initiatives, in compliance with EU Regulation 2016/679.

## 3. Funding

AIRC Short-term Fellowships will cover costs due to mobility up to a maximum of €1500 per month (max total budget €4500). Financial support must be requested through the specific section of the online form. Only the following costs can be covered by the fellowship:

- One round-trip to/from the Hosting Institution (economy fare);
- Accommodation;
- Local public transport;
- Health insurance, where applicable.

Please note that applicants can request financial support only for their own expenses, not for those of their dependents.

Applicants must declare in a dedicated form if any other financial support has been or is expected to be granted, to cover the expenses of their visit. **Be aware that AIRC money cannot be used to cover for expenses already covered by other sources of funding.**

Funds will be transferred either directly to the fellowship holder or to the Institution of origin. AIRC will not be able to top up applications in case of actual costs exceeding the amount approved by the Evaluation Committee.

## 4. The review process

All applications undergo an initial administrative review by the staff of the AIRC Peer Review Office for compliance with guidelines and eligibility; those that do not conform will be rejected at this stage (“triage”). Eligibility is determined based on the documentation in the application; **applications cannot be modified after the electronic submission.**

Each application will be evaluated by an Evaluation Committee chaired by the AIRC Scientific Director. It will comprise members of the AIRC Technical Scientific Committee (CTS) chosen by the Scientific Director on the basis of the necessary expertise and without conflicts of interest with the applicants and their supervisors.

Applications will be evaluated based on the impact of the proposed visit program on the career development of the applicants and on the scientific value of the expertise acquired during their staying. Applications to/from laboratories funded by AIRC will be considered positively in the evaluation phase.

At the end of the evaluation process, candidates will be notified of the results of their application with a communication from AIRC. **The funding decision cannot be appealed.**

Successful applicants will be asked to formally accept the AIRC Short-term Fellowship and to sign a copy of the Terms & Conditions form (Annex 1). **Please, make sure you have read and understood the content of this form before submitting your application.**

## 5. Fellowship activation

In case of assignment, a number of documents must be completed before the Short-term Fellowship can formally start; detailed instructions will be provided.

Communications or press releases regarding the awarding of a Short-term Fellowship cannot be made until all documents have been submitted and approved by AIRC; all communications in this regard should be coordinated with the AIRC press office. **Please note that the fellowship must be started within 3 months of the award notification date.**

## 6. Upon completion of the visit

Within a month from their return, Short-term Fellowship holders must:

- Fill in the **Expenses report** form and provide a copy of the expenditure receipts in a single PDF file;
- Provide **feedback** about the experience (max 1 page). The report must describe the activities undertaken during the visit and the impact on the project and career development of the fellow. It may include figures, diagrams and tables. If applicable, include here a plan about how to share the newly acquired expertise with other members of the team of origin.

AIRC will refund the mobility expenses either directly to the fellowship holder or to the Institution of origin, as indicated in the form.

## 7. Deadlines

Applications can be submitted throughout the year, until all available budget has been allocated.

<b>Online form release</b>	February 1, 2024
<b>Online submission with digital signature of the applicant</b>	At least 3 months before the proposed starting date
<b>Notification of result</b>	Typically within 2 months
<b>Official starting date</b>	Within 3 months from notification
<b>Assignment of funds form Scientific feedback</b>	Within 1 month from return
<b>Call closure</b>	At budget termination, or at the latest on December 18, 2024 at 17:00 Central Europe Time

**The applicant must digitally sign the application:** refer to the [FEA instructions](#) ("Firma Elettronica Avanzata") for details. In case of problems, please contact our offices ([administrative.office@airc.it](mailto:administrative.office@airc.it)).

## Annex 1. AIRC Short-term Fellowships – Terms & Conditions

The following template is provided as a facsimile of the Terms & Conditions agreement that the applicant will have to sign in case a fellowship is awarded.

I, the undersigned Dr. *Surname*, hereinafter referred to as “Fellow” declare that I accept the Short-term Fellowship awarded by AIRC to visit the laboratory of Dr. *Head of the Hosting Lab, Hosting Institution, City, Country* from *starting date* to *end date*.

- I. An AIRC Short-term Fellowship is not transferable to another person.
- II. AIRC will not transfer the amount of the Short-term Fellowship if the visit is cancelled.
- III. In case of a shorter visit than the one described in the application, AIRC reserves the right to reduce the Short-term Fellowship amount accordingly.
- IV. In case of breach of the aforementioned terms and conditions, AIRC reserves the right to withdraw the fellowship. Should this occur when the payment of the fellowship has already been made, the Fellow will be asked to transfer the granted amount back to AIRC.
- V. AIRC will refund mobility expenses up to the amount approved by the Evaluation Committee, upon presentation of receipts.
- VI. Successful applicant can use the support of the Short-term Fellowship only for the visit described in the application. AIRC must be informed of any variation, including application/granting of additional funding and visit period. Any substantial change must be authorized by AIRC.
- VII. AIRC may contact the supervisors of the Institution of origin and of the Hosting lab/Unit regarding the application.
- VIII. Each publication, press release or other document or media communication citing results from the Short-term visit carried out during the Short-term fellowship appointment must include an acknowledgement to AIRC.
- IX. Information related to the fellowship appointment (fellow's first and last name, Hosting Institution, visit program, amount granted) may be published on AIRC journal and websites, and on the website of any partner funder also contributing to the program. Fellow's contact data can be disclosed to third parties appointed by AIRC for engagement in AIRC institutional initiatives, in compliance with EU Regulation 2016/679.
- X. The Short-term fellowship award is regulated by these terms and conditions. Also, additional directives may be contained within the notification letter. In case of breach of the abovementioned Terms & Conditions AIRC reserves the right to withdraw the fellowship. Should this occur after the payment of the fellowship amount has been already made, the Fellow will have to transfer the granted amount back to AIRC.

Place and Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Annex 2. Guide to proposal preparation

### Helpdesk

To get information about the Call for proposals and support during the application, applicants can contact AIRC at this e-mail address [fellowships.applicationsupport@airc.it](mailto:fellowships.applicationsupport@airc.it)

### Access to AIRC Projects Administration and Grants Evaluation System (PAGES) website

Please, visit the website <https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/funding-for-research/other-funding-opportunities/>, and click on the “apply” button. You will be prompted to login or to register to PAGES.

#### Researchers who already have an AIRC account

You may login into your AIRC account with your username and password.

#### First-time applicants

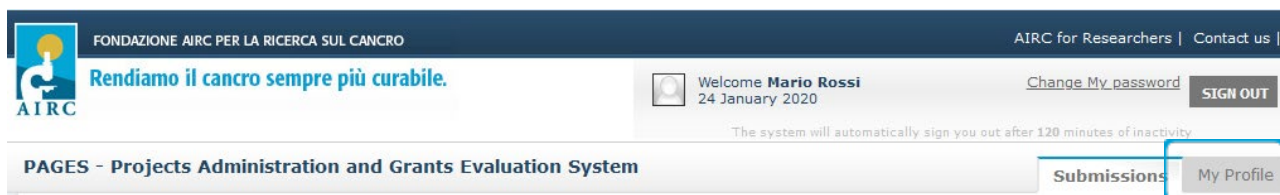
Only registered users can access the application form. Click on “Register (for applicants only)”.

Please provide the requested information (fields in **bold** are mandatory). The registration will be confirmed by e-mail and a username and password will be provided (please note that such e-mail will be sent by AIRC during working hours only). You will then be able to login into your AIRC account with your username and password.

### Before starting the application: update “My Profile”

To access “My Profile”, please login on your AIRC account: <https://www.pages.airc.it>

You need to **import the information directly from the My Profile section** to fill in a number of forms:



- Research and Professional Experience;
- Awards;
- Publications.

We strongly advise to insert/update the information in My Profile before starting to fill in the application forms; please note that some records already present in My Profile may be outside the applicable time range for data to be included in the application forms.



## General features of PAGES application form

- All forms that must be filled out are listed on the left side of the page. Click on each one of them and fill in all the mandatory fields (in bold). **Click on “SAVE” after completing each form;**
- the forms can be filled out in different sessions and the work can be interrupted and resumed at any time;
- a number of forms must be submitted as PDF files. **Files exceeding 4MB and secure PDF files cannot be uploaded.** Documents submitted as PDF files must be written using an A4 portrait format, single-spaced, with margins not less than 2 cm and **a font not smaller than 12 points. Do not exceed the page limit indicated for each section:** the system will not allow the upload of a number of pages beyond the limit;
- the letter of presentation and the letter of acceptance must be signed and uploaded as PDF files. **It is possible to use holographic or digital signatures.** Please note that digital signatures will no longer be visible in the final PDF application; however, the AIRC staff can check the uploaded document for the presence of such digital signatures;
- the **status** of each form is shown on the left:



**red cross for mandatory forms that are incomplete**

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**yellow circle for non-mandatory forms**

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**green mark for completed forms**

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The application must be written **entirely** in English.

**Applications that do not conform to all the requirements indicated in these instructions will be rejected.**

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## Application forms in detail

**To launch the application forms for the first time:** click on “Calls”, select “Fellowships”, then click on “Apply” in the “Short-term Fellowship” section. In the next window, click on “Access the application forms”.

**To access the application in progress:** click on “Submissions” and then click on “Access the application forms”.

### 1. Applicant’s personal data

Most fields are automatically filled out with information provided by the applicant at registration into the AIRC website; to modify the information in any of these fields, please click on “My profile” at the top of the

page and edit the text in the Personal data section.

Please provide the applicant's ORCID identifier. ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) provides a persistent digital identifier that distinguishes the applicant from every other researcher; for more information, please visit the website <http://orcid.org/>.

## 2. Short-term Fellowship title and proposed visit period

In the upper part of the form, please select **where the Hosting Lab is located** (Italy or Abroad), the **type of visit** (single or multiple separate trips), and indicate the **proposed starting and end dates**. Please note that you must indicate the total duration of the visit in this section.

In the lower part of the form, enter the **title of the visit program**; it must not exceed 120 characters, lowercase, spaces included.

## 3. Head of the hosting lab

If **the hosting lab is abroad**, please fill in all requested fields regarding the head of the hosting lab, the Hosting institution and contact details.

If **the hosting lab is located in Italy**, please insert the Tax Code ("codice fiscale") or the ORCID ID of the head of the hosting lab, then click on "Search":

- if the head of the hosting lab is already registered in the AIRC database, his/her name will appear and, by clicking on "Select", the system will import it in the application form;
- if the head of the hosting lab is not registered in the AIRC database, he/she must create his/her own personal account by clicking on "Register (for applicants only)" at: <https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/>. Registration will be confirmed by e-mail and a username and password will be provided. Then the head of the hosting lab will have to login to his/her AIRC account with the username and password and complete the "My profile" section. For questions on the registration procedure, please send an e-mail to [fellowships.applicationsupport@airc.it](mailto:fellowships.applicationsupport@airc.it).

Then, complete the form by adding:

- **the Hosting Institution:** select it from the drop-down menu; if the Hosting Institution is not listed in the menu or some information is not up-to-date, please follow the instructions provided here: <https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Registration-Hosting-Institution.pdf>. Applicants to Fellowships for Abroad must fill in the requested fields;
- **the Department:** select the applicant's department from the drop-down menu (unless the form indicates "not available"); if it is not listed in the menu or some information is not up-to-date, please follow the instructions provided here: <https://www.direzionescientifica.airc.it/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Registration-Hosting-Institution.pdf>;
- **the Laboratory:** if applicable (optional).

#### 4. Head of the laboratory of origin

Please fill in all fields with the requested data on the applicant's head of the lab of origin.

#### 5. Education of the applicant

In this section, please list the degrees held by the applicant or the programs he/she is enrolled in. Each applicant can add only one Master's degree, one PhD degree and one Specialty.

The form automatically shows the information stored in the "My Profile" section of the applicant's AIRC account. A record can be modified or updated anytime by clicking on the "Degree" column and filling in the pop-up window.

#### 6. Applicant's research and professional experience

*In order to complete this form, you need to update the "Research and professional experience" section in "My Profile".*

List all research and professional positions held by the applicant. (e.g., undergraduate and postgraduate research experiences, post-docs, activities after completing the residency) **without leaving any period unaccounted for**. By clicking on "Add new record" the form automatically shows the information inserted in the "My Profile" section of the applicant's AIRC account. By selecting some or all of these records, they will be uploaded in the current application; please check that all information is present. A record can be modified or updated anytime by clicking on the "Position" column and filling in the pop-up window.

#### 7. Awards of the applicant

*In order to complete this form, you need to update the "Awards" section in "My Profile".*

In this non-mandatory form, list up to five awards the applicant has been honored with. By clicking on "Add new record" the form automatically shows the information stored in the "My Profile" section of your AIRC account. Please select the records to be uploaded in the current application by checking on the corresponding box.

#### 8. Publications of the applicant

*In order to complete this form you need to update the "Publications" section in "My Profile".*

Provide the full list of all papers published in the last five years. Do not include abstracts, conference papers, letters to the editor, book chapters and papers published in non peer-reviewed journals.

From the application form:

- You can add new publications by selecting "**Add from My Profile - Publications**" button.

- To include manuscripts that have been accepted for publication but not yet published, please click on **“Add papers in press”**.
- To verify or update authorship information and to add AIRC acknowledgements, click on the publication title.

The applicant is responsible for uploading the most accurate information regarding publications and authorship. The IF assigned to each article, regardless of the publication date, is the latest provided by the Journal of Citation Reports (JCR) by Clarivate Analytics. For these Calls, the 2023 JCR list, with the 2022 IF will be used.

## 9. Visit program

A single PDF file of **max 2 pages** must be uploaded. The text, agreed upon both with the head of the hosting lab and the head of the laboratory of origin, must include:

- a detailed visit plan, explaining the activity that will be undertaken by the applicant at the Hosting institution. If available, please include the link to the lab website;
- a description of how the AIRC Short-term Fellowship will broaden the scientific knowledge of the applicant and how the Institution of origin will benefit from the applicant’s experience;
- in case of multiple separate visits at a single Hosting Institution, please add a strong justification supporting your visit program.

Please make sure to propose a visit plan that is **consistent with the work of one person and with the proposed duration of the fellowship**.

## 10. Letter of presentation

Please attach a letter of presentation by the head of the lab of origin. The letter (**max 1 page**) must be in letterhead paper, dated and signed, and must be uploaded as PDF file. **It is possible to use a holographic or a digital signature**. Please note that digital signatures will no longer be visible in the final PDF of the entire application; however, the AIRC staff can check the uploaded document for the presence of such digital signatures.

## 11. Letter of acceptance by the Hosting Institution

It is mandatory to use the [template](#) available in this form: please download it and fill in the requested fields. Do not modify or delete any of the template’s sections. Once completed, the letter must be printed out on letterhead paper and **signed by the head of the hosting lab (max 2 pages)**, then uploaded in the form. **It is possible to use a holographic or a digital signature**. Please note that digital signatures will no longer be visible in the final PDF of the entire application; however, the AIRC staff can check for the presence of such digital signatures in the uploaded document.

## 12. Funding

Indicate the requested budget by filling in the requested field and upload the **Budget justification** form. It is mandatory to use the [template](#) available in this form, do not modify or delete any of the template's sections.

This is an important part of your application. Take your time to carefully plan and thoughtfully justify your estimated expenses. AIRC will not be able to top up applications in case of actual costs exceeding the amount approved by the Evaluation Committee. Please find below some **tips and suggestions**:

- round-trip to/from Hosting Institution: search for fares online and strike a likely average; remember to add here costs for transport to/from airports/train stations;
- take advantage of websites (e.g. <https://www.expatis.com/cost-of-living>) to have an idea of the cost of living in the city where the Hosting Institution is located. It will help you estimate housing expenses and transportation costs;
- to convert estimated expenses from local currency to Euros, you can use an online currency converter such as <https://www1.oanda.com/currency/converter/>. Please note that this is just an estimate. AIRC will refund expenses based on the exchange rate on the day of the transaction;
- plan for a reasonable lifestyle during your stay.

## 13. Awarded/Pending Support

In this section, applicants are requested to disclose any additional financial support that they have been, or are expected to be granted to cover the expense of their visit program. In particular:

- **Awarded support:** the applicant has already obtained funding or received notification of funding;
- **Pending support:** the proposal submitted by the applicant is under consideration by the funding agency.

**Be aware that AIRC money cannot be used to cover for expenses already paid by other sources of funding.**

## 14. FEA Acceptance (“Firma Elettronica Avanzata”)

This form applies only to candidates who hold an Italian tax code (“codice fiscale”). Applicant must sign the submitted application with the digital signature tool provided by AIRC: refer to the [FEA instructions](#) for details. If the applicant does not hold an Italian tax code (“codice fiscale”), please contact our offices at [administrative.office@airc.it](mailto:administrative.office@airc.it).

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## Proposal submission and digital signature

Applications must be submitted and digitally signed **at least three months before the proposed starting**

**date.**

Please follow these steps:

- Access the “Check your forms” section anytime in order to:
  - a) check and see whether each form has been correctly filled out. A yellow warning sign will indicate whether there are missing data or inconsistencies that will not prevent the application from being submitted. For mandatory forms that are incomplete, the system will indicate the information that must be provided in order to submit the application;
  - b) view and print the application in its incomplete/complete state. By clicking on “Create draft” and then on “Open submission draft” you can download the PDF draft generated by the system;
- The “Submit” section becomes available only when all mandatory forms are complete and have the green flag. The submit section automatically creates the complete PDF draft: carefully read the PDF draft and verify that the entire content is correct and readable (e.g. make sure that applicant’s personal data and information regarding the Hosting Institution is up to date; make sure that PDF documents that have been correctly uploaded and have a high enough resolution; that all publications in the time range indicated have been added, with the inclusion – if necessary – of the correct supporting documentation, etc.).
- After having ascertained that all data are correctly reported in the proposal’s PDF draft, please check the box “I have checked the PDF files included in the application, and I confirm they are correct”. Only after this step it is possible to click on “Submit”.

**Be aware that after clicking on “Submit” it will not be possible to make any further modifications.**

Applicants will receive a confirmation of the submission by e-mail.

The following documents will be generated and stored in the “Your submissions archive” section of the Personal Area:

- **PDF file of the application:** this is the document that will be sent to the reviewers.
- **Publications addenda:** it contains the list of publications (also present in the PDF file of the application) and supporting documentation for papers in press, Web of Science Core Collection publications and authorship certifications;

A copy of the above documents should be saved for future references.

**The application cannot be modified after the online submission.**

**The evaluation of the proposal is ONLY based on the information contained in the application.**

To complete the application, the applicant must digitally sign the submitted document: please refer to the FEA instructions for details.

If applicants hold an Italian tax code (“codice fiscale”), they must sign the application with the digital signature tool provided by AIRC: refer to the [FEA instructions](#) for details. If applicants do not hold an Italian tax code, please contact our offices.