

Human Technopole Early Career Fellowship Programme

Human Technopole (HT)'s overarching mission is to promote and contribute to improving human health and wellbeing, including healthy ageing. It pursues these aims by carrying out frontier research (mix of fundamental and translational) in the life sciences, particularly focussing on developing novel approaches for personalised and preventive medicine. The HT operating model represents a combination of creating an internationally competitive research institute and being a contributor to the Italian research community by broad academic and translational collaboration.

Aim of funding opportunity

The purpose of the Early Career Fellowship (ECF) Programme is to help talented researchers start their own independent research at Italian universities or research institutes.

With this programme, HT together with the patronage of the Ministry of University and Research aims to foster the development of young independent, talented early-career scientists who have achieved significant results and recognition and who wish to carry out their research activity at an Italian institution (research centre or university) in the field of life sciences, contributing to the advancement of fundamental knowledge. At the same time, the ECF Programme will facilitate collaborative relationships between HT and the Italian research system.

Guidelines

The research activity proposed in the application should be in line with HT's overall research programme and, in particular, consistent with the activities of one of the [five HT Research Centres](#) in the areas of: Genomics, Neurogenomics, Computational Biology, Structural Biology, and Analysis, Decision and Society. The ECF researchers will have access to HT's research infrastructure at the same costs as internal researchers and will be expected to participate in internal meetings and/or events with HT Research Group Leaders.

Applications for the HT-ECF Programme must be submitted by an individual researcher (PI - Principal Investigator) together with a Letter of Intent from an Italian host institution (HI - Host Institution). The HI must undertake to provide the researcher with all the necessary facilities, equipment, and infrastructure to carry out the HT-ECF research proposed in the application, while ensuring agile and autonomous access to the awarded funds by the PI.

Prior to the start of the PI at the Host Institution, an agreement between HT and HI will be signed, with the specific purpose of ensuring and guaranteeing the independence of the PI. PIs are entitled to change HI during the period of the ECF Programme, giving an adequate notice period to the original HI; in such a case an agreement between the old and the new HI will need to be put in place.

PIs are expected to submit an annual report commenting on scientific achievements, usage of resources and impact of the ECF Programme on their career development.

Funding

Early Career Fellows will receive a total "research and remuneration package" of 200,000.00 euros per year for a period of five years. The award of up to five ECF grants is planned for the current call. The initial ECF package is intended to cover the salary of the PI, as well as junior researchers and/or other research related costs including publication, travel and workshop costs. The PI's engagement contract will be concluded directly by HT and/or by the HI. The research funds will be managed by the Host Institution and dedicated

exclusively to junior staff and/or research costs of the PI. The funds may also cover specialised equipment not normally available at the HI. In this case, with the consent of the PI, the equipment may remain in the possession of the HI at the end of the five-year research programme.

A candidate who receives the ECF award may not hold it concurrently with another grant designed to assist in establishing the scientist at a host institution in Italy and to pursue the same line of research. Exceptions to this will be made only under exceptional circumstances, which must be communicated promptly to HT for consideration. Co-funding from the host institution, on the other hand, would be positively considered.

Requirements and eligibility criteria

The Human Technopole Early Career Fellowship Programme (HT-ECF) is aimed at researchers of all nationalities who have completed a PhD. Candidates must:

1. **not have more than 8 years** of experience from the date of receipt of the doctoral degree. The calculation of this period is made by comparing the date the degree was awarded to the ECF application deadline (i.e. January 31, 2021). This limit may be extended in the case of maternity or paternity leave, serious and documented illness and for national service (military or civil) for a period corresponding to the leave granted by the research organisation for the reasons mentioned above (in these cases, appropriate documentation must be provided);
2. demonstrate significant **mobility** and independence between current and future host institution, i.e. must have carried out their latest research activities independently of their PhD supervisor and, in any case, at a different institution than that attended during the doctorate. The Host Institution of the ECF must be different from both the institution where the applicant is currently working;
3. have identified a **host institution in Italy** willing to provide the necessary facilities, equipment, and infrastructure to carry out the research proposed in the ECF application. The host institution demonstrates its commitment to act as a host by signing the Letter of Intent (see below “Structure of the application”);
4. develop a research plan that is in line with one of the [focus areas of HT](#), i.e. Genomics, Neurogenomics, Computational Biology, Structural Biology, and Analysis, Decisions and Society.
5. be willing to **start within 2021** in agreement with the host institution and HT. Earliest expected starting date is July 2021.

Structure of the application

All documents must be submitted in English and in pdf format. Please include your name in the title of each pdf document (e.g. MillerL CV.pdf, MillerL Publications.pdf, etc.) and the document title in the header of each separate document.

Applications must include:

1. CV of the candidate, up to 2 pages (please download and fill in the template provided below);
2. list of scientific publications of the applicant with specific indication of those produced independently of the PhD supervisor;
3. scientific research proposal – (please see below for a detailed description of the structure);
4. the corresponding financial plan of the research proposal, broken down by year with an indication of costs for staff, equipment, travel, supplies, meeting expenses and overheads, if relevant (please download and fill in the template provided below);

5. two letters of reference: These letters should be on institute letterhead, signed and scanned and contain the name of the applicant and referee in the file title (e.g. MillerL_from_SmithC.pdf). They must be sent directly from the referee via e-mail to earlycareerfellows@fht.org only (without cc to the candidate) by the submission deadline (i.e. January 31, 2021). It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that both letters are received on time. Applications lacking reference letters shall not be considered;
6. a Letter of Intent (LoI) signed by the legal representative – or their delegate (e.g. Head of Department) – of the Host Institution confirming the full support and encouragement of the institution towards the independent scientific research of the candidate and indicating the willingness to provide space and facilities for the implementation of the project, as well as agile modalities and procedures for access to the dedicated funding transferred by HT and exclusively dedicated to the PI's research project – ([a list of all aspects to be included in the LoI can be downloaded below](#));
7. if applicable, certification by a previous host institution/employer of the period of maternity or paternity leave granted, serious and documented sick leave or national service (military or civil).

The scientific project proposal must be sufficiently detailed to enable its evaluation by a panel of experts in the relevant field. The proposal should be in line with HT's scientific programme and should specifically indicate which of HT's Research Centres it is aligned with. The proposal, not exceeding ten pages in length (1.15 spacing; minimum font size 11) excluding bibliography, should allow for the evaluation of the quality of the candidate as well as of the originality and feasibility of the proposed research.

It must include the following sections:

- a. introduction, with a description of the preliminary work and background information;
- b. objectives to be achieved during the five years of the programme, including a description of the novel contribution of the proposed research to the relevant scientific area, highlighting its innovativeness and originality within the international scientific landscape;
- c. methods to be used and experimental programme;
- d. description of the reasons why the particular Host Institution has been selected and justification of its suitability to support the proposed research programme;
- e. bibliography (not included in the ten-page count).

How to apply

Please apply online by uploading all required documents apart from the reference letters in English by **January 31, 2021, 23:59 CET**. Please make sure that you inform your referees to send their confidential recommendation letters to earlycareerfellows@fht.org by the above mentioned deadline. Questions concerning the scope of the call should be sent to earlycareerfellows@fht.org.