Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD)

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OWSD Early Career Women Scientists Fellowships

Call for Applications

The Early Career Women Scientists (ECWS) fellowship is a prestigious award of up to USD 50,000 offered to women who have completed their PhDs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects and are employed at an academic or scientific research institute in one of the listed **Science and Technology Lagging Countries (STLCs)**. ECWS fellows will be supported to continue their research at an international level while based at their home institutes and to build up research groups that will attract international visitors.

You will find all the information you need to prepare your application below and this same information is also available for download.

All applications must be submitted online. The online system will be activated by 30 June 2018 and so the application form itself is not yet available but we recommend that you start to prepare the project proposal and collect the necessary documents as soon as possible.

Deadline for completed online applications will be 31 August 2018.

The official language for the application is English.

All information about the programme will be available in French shortly.

Successful candidates will be notified by October 2018 and expected to attend a first workshop in Trieste, Italy, in December 2018. Each fellowship lasts for two years from the date of acceptance.

If your questions are not answered in the information provided, contact **earlycareer@owsd.net**.

Purpose

The ECWS fellowships programme is administered by OWSD with funds generously provided by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

The ECWS fellowship specific objectives are:

1. Empower ECWS fellows to lead important research projects with practical applications for low and middle income countries (LMICs), including through strengthening their collaboration with industry.
2. Build the leadership and business skills of ECWS fellows needed for the dissemination and uptake of research results, and for career advancement.
3. Consolidate a network of outstanding women scientists that provides mentorship for the next generation of women leaders in STEM.

These objectives will be combined with the overall long-term objectives of the OWSD programme in general, which are to:

1. Increase the relevance and implementation of scientific research projects developed by women in STLCs for the economic, social, health and research needs of their countries.
2. Increase the numbers of women scientists from STLCs staying in their home countries in order to continue their scientific/industrial careers, thereby contributing to research training and development.
3. Strengthen the research, resources and expertise of institutes in STLCs.

Fellowship support

The ECWS fellowship is for two years and provides up to USD 50,000 to enable fellows to maintain an international level of research as well as initiate collaborations and partnerships with industry and the private sector.

Please note that the ECWS fellowship **does not provide for the fellow's salary** which must be guaranteed by the fellow's institute. However, the ECWS fellowship can be used to cover the costs of assistance to the fellow for teaching duties not directly related to the fellow's research in order that the fellow can focus on carrying her own research forward to an international level. The objective is to develop a center of specialist research recognised at national, regional or international level which can then attract internationally recognised researchers.

The eligible expenses are listed below.

a) Research-related costs

- *Equipment*
  ➢ Necessary equipment to build up research units or set up a lab
  ➢ Training in use of equipment
  ➢ Maintenance of equipment
- *Consumables*
  ➢ Expendable supplies that will be used up or replaced (e.g. glassware, solvents, feed, reagents)
- *Research visits, exchanges and programmes*
  ➢ Support for travel to attend international scientific meetings
  ➢ Establish a visiting scholar programme
  ➢ Organization of scientific events at applicant's institute (e.g. seminar series, international symposium, themed workshops, regional and international conferences)
  ➢ Organize exchange programmes with national/international scholars
- *Teaching and Assistance*
  ➢ MSc, PhD, Post doctoral researchers' costs
  ➢ Research assistants (e.g. to gather information and data)
  ➢ Teaching assistants
  ➢ Family care assistance (e.g. childcare costs in order for applicant to undertake research project, travel support for family members)
  ➢ Other assistant (based on applicant's needs, e.g. casual labour)
- *Field work*
  ➢ Transportation (e.g. car rental, public transport, airfare)

- Board and lodging
- Sample collection and analysis
- Hospitality fees (e.g. dinner with research partners in the field)
- *Publication costs* (e.g. in peer-reviewed journals, open source)
- *Information resources*
  - Subscriptions (e.g. journal, library)
  - Literature (e.g. books, reprints, photocopies)
  - Library resources
- *IT facilities*
  - Computer hardware
  - Computer software
  - Computer services (internet connections, technical support, database development)
- *Training*
  - Science communication (e.g. writing for publication, presentation skills)
  - English language courses (for improved science communication)
  - Specialist courses for team leader and project staff or group training sessions (e.g. long-distance learning)
- *Other*
  - Monitoring and evaluation costs (to measure the impact of the project)
  - Rent paid for land or premises used in a research activity
  - Any other research-related costs

b) Linking with industry

- Visits to companies, private sector (e.g. travel, board and lodging costs)
- Product development (e.g. patent, prototype, IP costs)
- Technology transfer
- Licensing costs
- Research-to-product related expenses
- Training (e.g. understanding/developing IP and patents, research-to-product training, communicating with industry, business, management and marketing skills)

A downloadable list of appropriate industry or private sector organizations for collaboration is available here.

c) Outreach, communication and networking

- Website development
- Communications materials (e.g. flyers, posters)
- Dissemination (e.g. development of stakeholders contact database for information sharing)
- Networking (e.g. development of online community/forum, linking with OWSD members and National Chapters, science academies)
- Mentoring (e.g. establishing a mentoring programme with partners in industry)
- Translation of project-related documents
- Training (e.g. social media, language courses necessary for communicating research)
- Other costs needed to undertake outreach activities

A downloadable list of the above eligible expenses is available here.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive. In addition, selection for a fellowship does not imply that all costs requested will be automatically granted. The Selection Committee will evaluate each expense requested in the proposed budget and take a final decision on related costs to be awarded.

Additional support provided by OWSD:

Two training workshops per fellowship on leadership and entrepreneurial skills.

- The first workshop (held in December of the first year of the fellowship in Trieste, Italy) will establish communication and networking between fellows and provide guidance on how to set up a lab, manage a research group and link with industry. Fellows will present their projects and work plans and receive feedback.
- The second workshop (held in May of the second year of the fellowship) will provide a *Dragons Den*-style scenario where fellows can develop and defend the commercial aspects of transforming their research into marketable products. This workshop will be hosted by one of the four OWSD regions, possibly by an appropriate OWSD national chapter or national academy.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the ECWS fellowship applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. **Eligible countries**

- Applicants must have been resident in one of the listed Science and Technology Lagging Countries (STLCs) for at least 5 years.
- The fellowship must be undertaken in one of the listed STLCs.
- The list of eligible countries is available **here**.
  Please note this list may be subject to slight variation each year according to criteria established by our donor, IDRC, and in agreement with OWSD. Each year the list will be updated when the call for applications is opened.

2. **Eligible STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)**

- Agricultural Sciences
- Astronomy, Space and Earth Sciences
- Biological Systems and Organisms
- Chemical Sciences
- Computing and Information Technology
- Engineering Sciences
- Mathematical Sciences
- Medical and Health Sciences
- Neurosciences
- Physics
- Structural, Cell and Molecular Biology

3. **Eligible academic qualification**

PhD in one of the above listed study fields.

- PhD awarded not more than 10 years prior to application.

4. **Eligible employment**

- At the time of application, applicants *must be already employed* at the university or research institute where the project will be carried out.
- The university or research institute must be based in one of the eligible countries.
- Applicants must provide evidence that they will receive a salary from the above institute for the duration of the two-year fellowship.

Research project proposal

For information concerning the section of the application dedicated to describing the details of the research project please **click here**.

Required documents for application

The documents listed below may take some weeks to prepare, especially when they require official signatures. We strongly encourage eligible applicants start gathering all requested documentation as soon as possible.

Applicants must submit:

1. **Passport**

- A scanned copy of the passport page containing personal details (photo, document number etc).
- Passport-size portrait photo

2. **Proof of residence**

- Official documentation that proves residency for the last 5 years in the listed STLC where the research will be undertaken (e.g. certificate of residency).

3. **PhD certificate**

- A scanned copy of the PhD certificate or proof of PhD issued by the University.

4. **Proof of employment**

- A letter from the employer (dean, vice-dean or equivalent head of the applicant's institute) on headed paper confirming applicant's position at the institute and that the applicant will receive a salary for at least two years starting from the year of application.

5. **Curriculum Vitae**

- Complete updated CV.

6. **Publications**

- Complete list of publications.

7. Reference letters

- Applicants must submit two (2) reference letters; at least one must be from a senior scientist familiar with the applicant's recent research.
- The letters must Include contact details for follow up from Selection Committee.

8. Supporting statement of head of applicant's institute

- A supporting statement of the head of the applicant's institute signed by the dean, vice-dean or equivalent head of institute. **The statement template can be downloaded here**.

9. Additional documentation

- The applicant may wish to provide additional documents which provide evidence of skills, qualities or actions described in the research project (e.g. certificate of awards, memberships etc).

All documents must be uploaded through the online application system which will be activated by 30 June 2018. Do not email any document to OWSD.

Evaluation

The applications will be assessed based on the following criteria and weighting:

Research proposal (50%)

- *Problem* identified: original, relevant, important.
- *Feasibility*: methodology, infrastructure, timetable/work schedule.
- *Context:* the applicant's institute has sufficient resources and attitude to support the applicant.
- *Collaborations* and network development: the applicant and the institute have and will have developed links to relevant organisations and individuals at national, regional and international level.
- *Linking with industry* i.e. efforts have been made to: establish links with industry and the private sector; develop prototypes or concrete applications for development; market a product or process.
- *Impact*: how will communities be affected by the research (e.g. increased access of marginal groups to resources, goods and services, improved quality of knowledge and training in a specific subject, product developed and used by local communities).
- *Inclusiveness*: research design and product development must demonstrate awareness of and relevance to diverse members of the community e.g. women, indigenous, ethnic, sexual minorities, possible links between disability and development.
- *Sustainability*: after OWSD funding has stopped how will the applicant ensure that her research and objectives continue to have an impact?
- *Ethical, environmental and risk factors*: the applicant has considered these aspects and addressed their mitigation.

Applicant's profile (50%)

- ***Scientific excellence*** based on demonstrable scientific activities such as publications, invitations to speak at international and regional conferences; chair and convenor of panels and meetings; reviewer of journal manuscripts or research grant proposals; recipient of national, regional and international grants and awards; membership of academic boards, committees, associations.
- ***Leadership skills*** based on demonstrable engagement in supervision; heading a team; coordinating a programme; organising events; founding a group, committee, task force; leading a campaign or movement; evidence advising roles to e.g. ministers, academic bodies, civil society organisations; evidence of having influenced positive change in practices and policies in academia and beyond.
- ***Outreach skills*** based on demonstrable engagement in community activitie**s** e.g. mentoring, tutoring, science communication, advocacy, volunteering, networking, support for youth.

Selection

The ECWS fellowship is intended for research that will have a demonstrable impact on the local, national or regional community. More theoretical, "basic" research will may also be considered if it contributes substantially to local/national/regional research needs. Although collaboration with industry is not mandatory, preference will be given to proposals including such collaborations. Applicants whose proposals emphasise basic research may consider applying to TWAS Research grants (https://twas.org/opportunities/research-grants).

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of eminent scientists who are specialists in the eligible subjects and have knowledge of the challenges facing women scientists from developing countries. Committee members will be appointed by OWSD and the selection meeting will be chaired by OWSD.

The Selection Committee's decision is final and without appeal. It cannot be contested or subject to explanation or justification.

Only selected applicants will be notified.

If selected for an ECWS fellowship, kindly note that OWSD must be informed by the fellow of additional/supplementary grants, funds and bursaries that have been awarded in connection with her research, specifying the donor, amount, duration and purpose of the grant.

Please note that funding from other sources is seen as a positive demonstration of concept and feasibility as long as resources requested expand and supplement activities and resources rather than duplicating them.