

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

AFR – MARIE-CURIE POSTDOC CALL 2013-2 (AFR-PDR)

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1. Introduction

The national research grant scheme AFR (Aides à la Formation-Recherche) supports PhD and postdoctoral level research training in Luxembourg and abroad.

Following two successful applications under the Marie-Curie-Actions of the European Commission (FP7-People-Cofund), the European Commission financially supports the AFR Postdoc scheme for the period 2009-2015. All AFR Postdoc beneficiaries eligible for Marie-Curie Cofunding¹ are hence in addition fellows of the highly-esteemed Marie-Curie Scheme.

Research under AFR should fulfil the following general principles:

- Adequate attention needs to be paid to working conditions, transparency of recruitment, equal opportunities and career development as regards the AFR applicants. In these matters, the **European Charter for Researchers** and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers offer a reference framework².
- Under the AFR scheme, **employment contracts** are the rule. In Luxembourg, the FNR exclusively supports researchers having an employment contract. Outside Luxembourg, stipends without employment contract are only possible in well-justified cases (i.e. where conclusion of a employment contract with the host institution is not possible; or results in a net salary of the Beneficiary below $\frac{3}{4}$ of the amount received for a stipend). However, only PDR applicants for employment contracts are eligible for Marie-Curie Cofunding.
- AFR grants cover the salary or, under a stipend, the living costs up to a max. contribution indicated in the Terms and Conditions. Other costs such as overheads or consumables are not covered.
- Research should respect fundamental **ethical principles**, including those described in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Qualifying Research Bodies are expected to have in place clear ethical guidelines and assurance procedures designed to manage research under their direction.
- **Research misconduct**, e.g. provision of false information, plagiarism or falsification of data, results in a rejection of the proposal. The FNR reserves the right to pursue further steps according to the 'Research Integrity Guidelines' accessible on the FNR website (<http://www.fnr.lu/en/Calls,-Forms-Guidelines/General-FNR-Guidelines>).
- An adequate set of scientific and non-scientific trainings shall be offered to each AFR beneficiary to **enhance the career perspectives** beyond the AFR funding period.
- The **dissemination of research results** and transfer of knowledge are key added values of a research project. The FNR expects that each funded AFR results in **at least one peer-reviewed first author publication**³. The **commercial and/or industrial exploitation of research results** is also greatly encouraged when it is appropriate. In addition, the FNR fosters the **dissemination of research towards the general public and the media**. Measures need to be taken to increase the use and impact of results by industry, policy makers and society. Financial support from the FNR must be acknowledged in all publications and other forms of media communication, press releases and conferences.

¹ Non eligible for Marie Curie Cofunding are Luxembourg nationals carrying out their project in Luxembourg or applicants applying for a stipend without work contract.

² The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment can be downloaded from <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/rights>

³ The FNR considers the following as peer-reviewed publications: a publication in a journal of the list of journals with impact factors published yearly by ISI Thompson; a publication in the journal index established by SCOPUS; a publication in peer-reviewed conference proceedings; or a monograph with a review board.

2. The AFR-Marie-Curie Postdoc Call 2013-2

2.1. Timing of the Call

Launch of call	June 2013
Deadline for submission	10th September 2013, 14:00 (CET)
Funding decision	December 2013 List (Project ID and funding decision) will be published on www.fnr.lu
Latest possible start of PDR project	1st July 2014

2.2. Relevant Call Documents

The following relevant documents for the AFR-Marie-Curie PDR Call 2013-2 are available on the FNR website <http://www.fnr.lu/en/Calls%2C-Forms-Guidelines/Call-Documents/AFR-PDR-Forms-and-Guidelines> :

- AFR Programme Description
- AFR Marie-Curie PDR Grants: Application Guidelines
- AFR Marie-Curie PDR Grants: General Checklist for the online grant application submission
- AFR Marie-Curie PDR Grants: Project Description Form (Call 2013-2)
- AFR Marie-Curie PDR Grants: Applicant's and Host Institution's Joint Declaration
- AFR Marie-Curie PDR Grants: Terms and Conditions
- AFR Marie-Curie PDR Grants: Confidential Reference Report Template
- AFR Evaluation Guidelines for Remote Reviewers and Panel Members (including template for the written evaluation)

Moreover, the following documents are relevant for any research project application (www.fnr.lu/en/Calls,-Forms-Guidelines/General-FNR-Guidelines):

- The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers
- Research Integrity Guidelines
- European Charter Code of Conduct for Research Integrity

3. General Principles

3.1. Eligible Applicants

The AFR follows a bottom-up approach, **has no thematic limitations and is open to all researchers**, regardless of their nationality. AFR beneficiaries are eligible consecutively for PhD and for postdoctoral funding.

The AFR has two strands:

- 1) AFR projects carried out in Luxembourg (IN), i.e. more than 50% of research time is spent in Luxembourg, under an employment contract. Applicants from any nationality may apply under this strand
- 2) AFR projects carried out abroad (OUT): The FNR offers grants to researchers abroad, who
 - are either nationals (or political refugees), or residents for more than 5 consecutive years in Luxembourg, or
 - collaborate with a Luxembourg company (AFR-PPP); in this case, applicants from any nationality may apply, but at least 25% of the work has to be spent in the company in Luxembourg.

The AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR grant scheme is open to applicants in possession of a doctoral degree of a recognised higher education institution (please note that Medical Doctor (MD) studies are not taken equivalent to PhD studies). The researcher is considered in “possession” of a PhD, if she/he can at least provide a certificate from the awarding authority attesting that all conditions linked to the award of the PhD (including defense of the thesis) have been fulfilled. If an applicant is not in possession of a doctoral degree at the relevant call submission deadline (e.g. final PhD examination has not been passed yet), such a certificate must be provided **the latest 1 month** after the submission deadline otherwise the proposal will be turned down without further evaluation. In addition, applicants not in possession of a PhD at the relevant call submission deadline must join a statement by their PhD supervisor addressing this issue.

Postdoctoral candidates can apply until up to 8 years after the date of their PhD certificate (the date of the call submission deadline counts). Furthermore, in order to be eligible as a postdoctoral applicant, **the research work has to be carried out in a different country from where the applicant has been principally (>12 months) working in the 24 months preceding the call deadline**. These two eligibility conditions are binding, without exception.

Applications in the fields of natural sciences, mathematics, IT, engineering and economics have to be written in **English**. In fields where the standard scientific language is French or German (e.g. law, literature, linguistics), applications may exceptionally be drafted in one of these languages.

3.2. Eligible Institutions

The **Host Institution (HI)** is the institution (and the research group) where the AFR beneficiary performs the major part of her/his research work. Postdoc grants provided by the FNR are aimed at Host Institutions to employ AFR beneficiaries to conduct their research work. The HI must offer scientific guidance and training as well as office and/or laboratory

space allowing the applicant to properly carry out the described research project. It is the responsibility of the applicants to find a suitable HI with a competent research group in their field.

The institution hosting a postdoctoral applicant should ensure that it can offer an employment contract for the full duration of the project, e.g. 24 months. The legal maximum for a fixed term contract for researchers in Luxembourg is five years.

The following are **eligible HI for AFR beneficiaries**:

- Recognised research and higher education institutions in Luxembourg or abroad;
- Public bodies or non-profit making associations and foundations⁴ in Luxembourg with a research mission and scientific competence in the domains of the project;
- Private companies located in Luxembourg that are active in R&D, in collaboration with a public research institution in Luxembourg or abroad; if private companies intend to serve as HI, they need to provide an accreditation ('*agrément*') issued by the Ministry of Economic Affairs in order to be eligible (see section "Public-Private Partnerships" for further details);
- Public institutions abroad with a research mission and scientific competence in the domain of the project.

Each proposal must be signed by the person authorised to legally commit the Host Institution of the involved applicant (see 'Joint Declaration').

Besides the HI, there may be up to two '**Collaborating Institutions**'. These are institutions from the public or private sector (within Luxembourg or abroad) with a research mission, where the AFR beneficiary performs a **part** of her/his research, i.e. less than 50 % of the total project time may be spent at a collaborating institution. For the private companies under PPP specific rules and other restrictions may apply (section "Public-Private Partnerships"). The collaborating institution will not employ the AFR beneficiary but also commits to offer scientific guidance and training as well as office and/or laboratory space, if applicable.

Collaborations in the project where no supervision or mentoring of the candidate is involved should be listed as "other collaborations" and are not considered as 'Collaborating Institutions'.

3.3. Selection Criteria

The AFR applications for postdoctoral research projects will be assessed according to the **following selection criteria** as specified in article 3(12) of the law creating the FNR, namely:

1. Scientific quality of the research project
2. Profile of the applicant
3. Quality of the Host Institution
4. Interest of the research project in the Luxembourg R&D setting
5. Potential of the research project for career development

⁴ Associations sans but lucratif ou fondations régies par les dispositions de la loi modifiée du 21 avril 1928 sur les associations et les fondations sans but lucratif

The submitted research proposals will be reviewed in a two-stage process. In a first stage, every proposal will be remotely evaluated. In a second stage, a thematic panel meeting will be held in Luxembourg, where the selection of the proposals to be considered for funding in the respective domains will be finalised. In the review process, applications will be evaluated according to the criteria listed above. Special attention will be given to project proposals that raise ethical and/or data protection issues. Applicants will receive a written feedback on the arguments that led to the funding decision (evaluation synthesis) as well as the full remote reviews.

More detailed information about the selection criteria and the peer review process are described in the document 'AFR Evaluation Guidelines for Remote Reviewers and Panel Members' available under www.fnr.lu/AFR.

3.4. Research Training Environment

Scientific support and training offered to the postdoctoral applicant as well as an **excellent research framework of the postdoctoral project** are key elements for a successful completion of the research project. Scientific support should be tailored to meet the requirements of the individual applicant and her/his development throughout the project. The quality of the scientific advisor(s) and the research group as well as how the applicants' supervision and training is organised will be ranked in the evaluation.

The AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR project must be carried out in close collaboration with at least one qualified researcher in the domain of the project in the host institution who is actively involved in the scientific training and the career development of the researcher. The scientific advisor(s) shall ensure that the postdoctoral research project is conducted in accordance with the code of conduct for professional work in the field in question, and without any restrictions on the freedom to publish results that are incompatible with academic freedom.

The importance of acquiring non-scientific skills in addition to scientific research **training** throughout the postdoctoral period is increasingly recognised. It is recommended for the postdoctoral researcher to define an **Individual Development Plan** with the main scientific contact(s)/mentor at the start of the project and to keep it updated during the course of the project, addressing the following points:

Individual Development Plan

- **Research Environment** – Working environment and relationships.
To be addressed:
 - Frequency and quality of meetings
 - Collaborations
 - Networking
- **Skills and Training** – Scientific and non-scientific skills. Depending on the results of a self-assessment, the following may be considered:
 - Opportunities to practice oral and written communication
 - Improving project management and leadership-skills
 - Teaching or supervision experience
 - Outreach actions e.g. active participation to events of Promotion of Scientific Culture
- **Career Development** – discuss career to date and future plans.

3.5. Project Characteristics

Calls for application and latest possible project start

The AFR launches **two calls per year**, one in spring and one in autumn. The funding decision will be available 3 months after the submission deadline. **Latest possible start** for projects submitted in the autumn call is 1st July of the following year. **Latest possible start** for projects submitted in the spring call is 1st January of the following year. Please note that the FNR reserves the right to review its funding decision if the start of the project is delayed beyond these dates.

Funding duration for PDRs

The AFR funds Postdoctoral research studies for up to **2 years**. The minimum AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR grant duration is 12 months.

Employment contracts and fellowships

Employment contracts shall be the rule. AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR grants are aimed at Host Institutions to employ AFR beneficiaries to conduct their research studies. Fellowships without employment contracts are only awarded outside Luxembourg in exceptional cases (see AFR Terms & Conditions) and will not be cofunded by Marie-Curie.

Financial contribution of the AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR grants

For **AFR beneficiaries with employment contracts**, the FNR pays to the Host Institution a maximum contribution to the annual salary costs of 55.586 € /year (salary index as of 1st January 2013). A topping-up by the employer is possible up to a certain amount. For further details, please refer to the 'AFR Terms and Conditions'.

Beneficiaries of an **AFR MARIE-CURIE Postdoc fellowship** (without employment contract) will receive monthly stipends of 2,100 €. For further details, please refer to the 'AFR Terms and Conditions'.

The FNR does accept cumulating two grants for living costs of different origin only up to the maximum limit indicated in the Grand-Ducal Regulation⁵ (see Terms and Conditions). Researchers who have been awarded a grant for living costs from an external source of funding may apply for AFR fellowship. However, in case of approval of the two grants, the full basic grant is paid by the FNR and the topping-up may come from another source that needs to certify their awareness and agreement with the AFR grant.

Travel lump sum

For all AFR beneficiaries, the FNR allocates a one-off travel lump sum based on the airline distance between the beneficiary's residence at the moment of the application and her/his Host Institution. For further details, please refer to the 'AFR Terms and Conditions'.

Training allowance

The FNR strongly encourages complementing basic academic training with additional training targeting skills development to increase the employability and career prospects of researchers. A **specific budget** for scientific and non-scientific training of up to **4000 € / AFR Marie-Curie Postdoc grant** is available to cover additional costs (e.g. travel to scientific conferences, conference registration fees). For further details, please refer to the 'AFR Terms and Conditions'.

⁵ Reglement Grand Ducal A162, 31st Oct. 2008

3.6. Public-Private Partnership

The FNR supports researchers who carry out their postdoctoral research project in collaboration with a private company active in R&D in Luxembourg (AFR-PPP).

A financial incentive is paid by the FNR under the AFR-PPP: the FNR pays to the Host Institution a maximum contribution to the annual salary costs of maximum 60.653 € /year (salary index as of 1st January 2013). A topping-up by the employer is possible up to a certain amount. To benefit from the AFR-PPP supplement, i) private companies need to be in possession of an **accreditation** by the Ministry of Economic Affairs⁶, certifying their R&D activities in Luxembourg, ii) the PPP must be indicated in the application, and iii) the specific requirements (e.g. submission of additional documents) must be fulfilled. Later changes will not receive the AFR-PPP supplement. If the accreditation is not available at the call submission deadline, proof must be provided that it has been applied for and the document has to be provided to the FNR at the signature of the grant agreement at the latest. For further details, please refer to the 'AFR Terms and Conditions'.

In order to be eligible for AFR-PPP support, the project applied for must be a research study with an element of innovation and the potential to create new knowledge. It should not be a pure engineering project and in any case it must not simply cover the daily operational business of the company. The private company plays an active role in the scientific guidance and the training of the postdoctoral researcher. There must be at least one scientific/technological expert (scientific contact) in the company, able to actively accompany the beneficiary and the project over time. In addition, the AFR beneficiary is also required to follow academic training in a public research institution. The applicant should not spend less than 10% and not more than 75% of the postdoc period in the company. In case the collaborating public research institution is located outside Luxembourg, the applicant should not spend less than 25% in Luxembourg. A contract specifying the contributions of each partner to the research project, including an **agreement on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)**, needs to be concluded between all partners and a term sheet has to be submitted with the application.

AFR Public-Private Partnerships

- Research project is jointly developed by the applicant, the private company and the public partner.
- Research project with an element of innovation and the potential to create new knowledge; in any case it must not simply cover the daily operational business of the company.
- > 10% and < 75% of the Postdoc research period spent in the company
- Extra funding is granted for AFR-PPP
- Agreement on IPR required => publication of results should be possible

The AFR-PPP applications will be processed and evaluated like a standard AFR proposal. The reviewers will take into account that the industrial research projects might have different requirements concerning the dissemination of results. Members of the thematic expert panels working in the private sector ensure an adequate evaluation of PPP applications.

⁶ Loi FNR art 3 (8)

3.7. Ethical Issues

Research should respect fundamental **ethical principles**, including those described in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Qualifying Research Bodies are expected to have in place clear ethical guidelines and assurance procedures designed to manage research under their direction. Where an applicant's research proposal requires approval by the relevant Research Body Ethics Committee, written evidence of such ethical approval will need to be obtained and available for examination by the FNR prior to the launch of the concerned part of the project. The applicant together with the host institution must take into account in a realistic manner the duration of processing of these authorisations into their work plan. The AFR beneficiary and his/her host institution must make sure that they respect any legal obligations concerning ethical issues and data protection (see AFR Terms and Conditions).

In case the project raises ethical issues, these need to be properly described in the proposal with an explanation how these issues will be addressed. The present **Ethical Issues Table** from the ERC grant proposals provides a guide to what are considered to be ethical issues. If the answer to any of the questions of the Ethical Issues Table is YES, the applicant must provide a brief description of the ethical issue involved and how it will be dealt with appropriately. In particular, it should outline the benefit and burden of such research, the effects it may have and how the ethical issues will be managed. Ethical issues need to be considered for the whole postdoctoral project and for the activities executed in Luxembourg and abroad. The applicant should specify any already existing authorisation or permission for the proposed work and include copies (the copies do not count towards the page limit). On this basis, a proper ethical screening is possible, if the proposal is considered for funding.

The following Ethical Issues Table is also in annex of the project description template and has to be fully completed. Furthermore the ethical and data protection issue section of the online application form has to be filled in.

Ethical Issues Table

Research on Human Embryo/Foetus
Does the proposed research involve human Embryos?
Does the proposed research involve human Foetal Tissues/ Cells?
Does the proposed research involve human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?
Does the proposed research on human Embryonic Stem Cells involve cells in culture?
Does the proposed research on Human Embryonic Stem Cells involve the derivation of cells from Embryos?
DO ANY OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL?
Research on Humans
Does the proposed research involve children?
Does the proposed research involve patients?
Does the proposed research involve persons not able to give consent?
Does the proposed research involve adult healthy volunteers?
Does the proposed research involve Human genetic material?
Does the proposed research involve Human biological samples?
Does the proposed research involve Human data collection?
DO ANY OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL?
Privacy
Does the proposed research involve processing of genetic information or personal data (e.g. health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction)?
Does the proposed research involve tracking the location or observation of people?
DO ANY OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL?
Research on Animals
Does the proposed research involve research on animals?
Are those animals transgenic small laboratory animals?
Are those animals transgenic farm animals?
Are those animals non-human primates?
Are those animals cloned farm animals?
DO ANY OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL?
Research Involving Developing Countries
Does the proposed research involve the use of local resources (genetic, animal, plant, etc.)?
Is the proposed research of benefit to local communities (e.g. capacity building, access to healthcare, education, etc.)?
DO ANY OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL?
Dual Use
Research having direct military use
Research having the potential for terrorist abuse
DO ANY OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL?
Other Ethical Issues
Are there OTHER activities that may raise Ethical Issues?
If YES please specify:

The following special issues should be taken into account:

Informed consent: When describing issues relating to informed consent, it will be necessary to illustrate an appropriate level of ethical sensitivity, and consider issues of insurance, incidental findings and the consequences of leaving the study.

Data protection issues: Avoid the unnecessary collection and use of personal data. Identify the source of the data, describing whether it is collected as part of the research or whether it was collected previously. Consider issues of informed consent for any data being used. Describe how personal identify of the data is protected.

Use of animals: Where animals are used in research, the application of the 3Rs (Replace, Reduce, Refine) must be convincingly addressed. Numbers of animals should be specified. Describe what happens to the animals after the research experiments.

Human embryonic stem cells: Research proposals that will involve human embryonic stem cells (hESC) will have to address all the following specific points:

- the applicants should demonstrate that the project serves important research aims to advance scientific knowledge in basic research or to increase medical knowledge for the development of diagnostic, preventive or therapeutic methods to be applied to humans.
- the necessity to use hESC in order to achieve the scientific objectives set forth in the proposal. In particular, applicants must document that appropriate validated alternatives (in particular, stem cells from other sources or origins) are not suitable and/or available to achieve the expected goals of the proposal. This latter provision does not apply to research comparing hESC with other human stem cells.
- the applicants should take into account the legislation, regulations, ethical rules and/or codes of conduct in place in the country(ies) where the research using hESC is to take place, including the procedures for obtaining informed consent;
- the applicants should ensure that for all hESC lines to be used in the project were derived from embryos
- of which the donor(s)' express, written and informed consent was provided freely, in accordance with national legislation prior to the procurement of the cells.
- that result from medically-assisted *in vitro* fertilisation designed to induce pregnancy, and were no longer to be used for that purpose.
- of which the measures to protect personal data and privacy of donor(s), including genetic data, are in place during the procurement and for any use thereafter. Researchers must accordingly present all data in such a way as to ensure donor anonymity;
- of which the conditions of donation are adequate, and namely that no pressure was put on the donor(s) at any stage, that no financial inducement was offered to donation for research at any stage and that the infertility treatment and research activities were kept appropriately separate.

In **case of multi-national projects**, identify the countries where research will be undertaken and which ethical committees and regulatory organisations will need to be approached during the life of the project.

3.8. Marie-Curie Co-funding

Following two successful applications under the Marie-Curie-Actions of the European Commission (FP7-People-Cofund) in 2008 and 2010, the European Commission financially supports the AFR postdoc scheme for the period 2009-2015.

All AFR Postdoc beneficiaries eligible for Marie-Curie Cofunding⁷ are hence in addition fellows of the highly-esteemed Marie-Curie Scheme. In fact, this holds true for most of the AFR postdoc applicants and the AFR beneficiaries will be informed in the Grant Agreement by the FNR whether they are also Marie-Curie Fellows.

A link to funding opportunities and calls co-funded by the Marie Curie Actions of the European Commission is available on the EU –Researcher Participant Portal Website under <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/cofund>

4. Applying for the AFR Call

4.1. AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Application Procedure

Applicants must submit their application in electronic format to the online submission system (FNR Grant Management System) <https://grants.fnr.lu> no later than **14:00 (CET)** on the **deadline**. To be eligible, applicants have to use the **templates valid for the relevant call**.

In order to be eligible, the **joint declaration** has to be signed by the Host Institution and officially stamped. The signed joint declaration has to be scanned and uploaded **before the call deadline** using the online submission system (FNR Grant Management System) <https://grants.fnr.lu>. **No signed paper version has to be submitted to the FNR.**

**AFR-Marie-Curie Postdoc Submission deadline:
10 September 2013, 14:00 CET**

Late or incomplete applications (including confidential letters of reference) are not eligible!

Please note that certain Host Institutions, in particular Luxembourg Host Institutions, have internal rules regarding the submission of AFR applications. They may, for example, require that AFR applications must first be examined and approved by their administration before they can be submitted online to the FNR. In the early preparation stage of the AFR application (and no later than 1 month prior to the submission deadline), applicants should therefore get in touch with the HI's internal AFR administrative contact to inform her/him of the intention to submit an AFR proposal and to clarify the internal submission procedure. However, in the initial planning stage of an application, the first point of contact for an applicant should be the future scientific advisor.

⁷ Non eligible for Marie Curie Cofunding are Luxembourg nationals carrying out their project in Luxembourg or applicants applying for a stipend without employment contract. All other AFR postdoc beneficiaries are eligible for Marie-Curie Cofunding.

The AFR contacts at Luxembourg Host Institutions are:

- University of Luxembourg
 - Administrative contact and general AFR-related issues:
 - Research facilitators of the faculties (see www.uni.lu)
 - In addition: e-mail: recherche@uni.lu
 - General questions about doing a Postdoc at the UL:
 - Contact: Heike Scheuerpflug; e-mail: heike.scheuerpflug@uni.lu
 - Legal representative: Prof. Ludwig Neyses, Vice-Rector Research
- CRP Henri Tudor:
 - Administrative contact and general AFR-related issues:
 - Myriam Fautsch, e-mail: myriam.fautsch@tudor.lu; and Project.office@tudor.lu
 - Legal representative: Dr. Marc Lemmer, Director
- CRP Gabriel Lippmann:
 - Administrative contact and general AFR-related issues:
 - Stephane Kucharczyk; e-mail: kucharcz@lippmann.lu
 - Legal representative: Dr. Fernand Reinig, Director
- CRP Santé
 - Administrative contact for project and AFR-related issues:
 - Jo Schroeder, Dominique Mormont projects@crp-sante.lu
 - Administrative contact for employment contract, visa and related issues:
 - Natacha Beicht; e-mail: natacha.beicht@crp-sante.lu
 - Legal representative/contact for general AFR-related issues:
 - Dr. Jean-Claude Schmit, Director
- CEPS/INSTEAD:
 - Administrative contact and general AFR-related issues:
 - Carole Stefanuto; e-mail: carole.stefanuto@ceps.lu
 - Questions about Postdoc opportunities:
 - Paola Dumet; e-mail: paola.dumet@ceps.lu
 - Legal representative:
 - Dr. Hilmar Schneider, Director

4.2. AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Evaluation

The AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Peer-Review process guarantees an independent, state-of-the-art evaluation of the application, and has the objective to select the research projects and applicants that reflect **academic excellence**. All proposals will be evaluated according to the five **selection criteria**. The AFR review process consists of several stages:

- Proposals undergo an **administrative eligibility check**. Applicants will receive a confirmation of the eligibility or non-eligibility of the proposal within two weeks following the deadline. In case of non-eligibility, the reasons are indicated and the application will not be assessed.
- Eligible proposals are remotely **peer-reviewed** by independent, international researchers (EU and non EU).
- A **thematic expert panel** rates the proposals and recommends funding.
- The **funding decision** is formalised by the Secretary General before being communicated to the AFR beneficiaries.

In the review process, applications will be evaluated according to the criteria listed above. Special attention will be given to project proposals that raise ethical and/or data protection issues. It is expected that the ideas and/or text belonging to others be properly referenced. All applicants will receive a written feedback on the arguments that led to the funding decision (evaluation synthesis) as well as the full remote reviews.

The **funding decision** will be communicated to the applicants within 3 months.

The description of the review process and the selection criteria can be found in the publication '**Peer Review Guidelines**' available on the FNR webpage: www.fnr.lu/AFR.

4.3. FNR Grant Management System (Online Submission)

All FNR Calls, including the current AFR Marie-Curie PDR Call, are managed through an **online submission system** (FNR Grant Management System) accessible via <https://grants.fnr.lu>. This system provides applicants a web services interface for automated submission and further monitoring of completed grant applications and related services (acknowledgement emails, notifications and reminders). The publication '**e-Tutorial: Online Application**' explains how to log into the system and how to create a new application. Please download it from the webpage: <https://grants.fnr.lu/help/>

The system will guide the applicant through the different steps of the application procedure. All forms have to be filled in online and submitted in electronic format.

For documents that need to be uploaded to the online system, please respect the font and page limitations indicated in the application forms! If page limitations are not respected, the FNR retains the right to shorten the document and only forward the correct amount of pages to the external evaluators! In order to be eligible, the valid forms of the relevant call have to be used.

For technical questions regarding the FNR Grant Management System, please contact us by e-mail at tech-support@fnr.lu or call our Help Desk at +352 26 19 25 45.

5. AFR-PDR Application

The AFR Application for a Postdoc project consists of **the following elements**:

- The **PDR Online Application Form**: to be accessed and completed online in the FNR's online Grant Management System (<https://grants.fnr.lu>).
- The **PDR Project Description Form (Project Description)** contains detailed information on the proposed research project. A Word file template is to be downloaded and completed offline, afterwards converted to PDF and then uploaded to the PDR Online Application Form in the online system. The 'Project Description' cannot be submitted alone.
- The **supporting documentation** (to be uploaded):
 - The **Letter of Intent** is a brief personal statement for the choice of research project and should include a rationale for the institution and the scientific advisor chosen (no template provided)
 - The **Training Plan**
 - The **Recent Curriculum Vitae for Applicant and all Scientific Advisor(s)** (no template provided)

- The **Copies of Degree Certificates and Statement of Courses and Marks** ('relevé de notes') (no template provided)
- The **Description of the Research Framework within the Host Institution (and the Collaborating Institution(s))** (no template provided)
- The **Joint Declaration** of the applicant and the Host Institution, **signed by the Host Institution** (template provided)
- **Copy of Passport**
- If applicable: Additional documents relevant for an application under the AFR-Private Public Partnership (PPP) scheme (see section "Public-private partnership")
- If applicable: Additional documents in special cases (e.g. proof of personal link to Luxembourg; justification of part-time work)
- If applicable: Reference letter for the applicant by former supervisor / scientific advisor (not mandatory, no template provided). Applicants not in possession of a PhD at the relevant call submission deadline must join a statement by their PhD supervisor addressing this issue.
- The **Confidential Letters of Reference** for the applicant, to be provided by the main scientific advisor(s) involved in the project. The FNR will have to receive at least one **confidential reference letter** per research group by the main scientific contact of the group. Scientific advisors/contacts should use the template of the reference letter provided on the FNR webpage: www.fnr.lu/AFR. **The letters are confidential and must be sent until the deadline by email by the scientific advisor directly to the FNR at afr@fnr.lu.**

If no templates are provided, make sure that you address the specific points mentioned in the sections of the online application detailed in these Guidelines in "*blue italics*" below.

Incomplete applications (e.g. missing letters of reference) will be turned down without further evaluation!

An **e-Tutorial** for the Grant Management System is available in the 'Help' section of the online submission system and on the FNR website. Information on how to prepare the proposal is given on the following pages in *blue italic characters* inside the forms.

For further advice and support, please contact the FNR-AFR Programme Assistant.

5.1. Step 1: Completing the Online Application Form

Step 1 of the AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Application consists of 5 different tasks, which are presented as a 'To Do' list:

- **Task 1: Enter your contact and address details**
- **Task 2: Fill in the Online Application Form (+ uploads, including the AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Project Description Form)**
- **Task 3: Generate a PDF Document**
- **Task 4: Check application for completeness**
- **Task 5: Make sure your Scientific Advisor(s) have sent their support letters before the deadline**

After completion of each task, press the button 'Done' to validate the completion of the task and remove it from your 'To Do' list.

The first task named **'Enter your contact and address details'** requires you to enter your details in the Online System. The hyperlink brings you directly to the Online Contact Form. Please click on the "Save" button after having completed the form. Applicants are advised keep their contact details in the online system up-to date.

A click on the hyperlink of the second task named **'Online Application Form – AFR'** brings you to the Online Application Form (labelled 'Smartform') for the AFR Proposal, which contains the administrative and budgetary details of your project. The present document (**Application Guidelines**) will guide you through the application stages.

The Online Application Form is divided into 7 sections that can be accessed individually:

- **Section 1. Applicant**
- **Section 2. Details on Host Institution and Collaborating Institution(s)**
- **Section 3. Research Project and Project Framework**
- **Section 4. Interest of the Research Project in the Luxembourg R&D Setting**
- **Section 5. Legal and Ethical Requirements**
- **Section 6. Type of Grant**
- **Section 7. Attachments**

If there is a reference to sections in these Guidelines below, they refer to the numbering of sections in the online Grant Management System.

The 'Online Application Form' may be saved at any time and you may come back to it later on. Before you may submit the completed form however, you need to make sure that all mandatory questions (marked with *) have been filled out. The system partially warns you of mandatory sections but put a special attention on the completeness of documents that need to be uploaded. Please also ensure that all data is correct before submission.

In the section 7 you have to **'Download the AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Project Description Form'**. This requires you to download a WORD document, named 'AFR 2013-2 Postdoc Project Description Form'. Please save it to your desktop and complete it off-line. A detailed description of the form is available in the dedicated section below. The 'Project Description Form' is part of a web-based online application and cannot be submitted alone. The Form is also available on the FNR website (www.fnr.lu), but make sure you are using the right version (Call 2013-2).

5.1.1. Applicant

Section 1.1 Applicant's Details

- Application ID: *Generated automatically*
- Call ID: *Generated automatically*
- First Name (s): * *Given name of the applicant*
- Family Name: * *Surname of the applicant*
- Gender: * *Male/Female*
- Discipline of PhD:
- University/Institution Issuing the PhD Certificate:
- Date of Certificate: *Issuing date of PhD certificate. Copy of PhD certificate and a copy of the statement of courses and marks ('relevé de notes') of the most recent degree must be submitted. Copies of these documents may be submitted in English, French or*

German. If in any other language, they must be translated into English, French or German and officially certified.

Applicants not in possession of a PhD at the relevant call submission deadline must join a statement by their PhD supervisor addressing this issue (section 7.9). In addition, the certificate must be provided the latest 1 month after the submission deadline otherwise the proposal will be turned down without further evaluation (see section 3 of this document).

- Date of Birth: *
- Nationality: *
- E-mail: * *E-mail Address to be used for electronic correspondence*
- Did you receive a BFR/AFR grant before? *Yes/No*
- If “yes”, indicate BFR/AFR period: *funding period and reference*

A copy of the passport has to be attached to the application (section 7.5.)

Section 1.2 Mobility

- Do you fulfil the mobility criterion?: * *YES/NO In order to be eligible as a postdoc, the research training has to be carried out in a different country from where the applicant has been principally (> 12 months) working in the 24 months preceding the call deadline.*

Section 1.3 Language Proficiency

- *List all the languages in the first column and indicate with a number from 1 to 5 the degree of your knowledge in speaking, writing and reading/understanding (1=native speaker, 2=excellent, 3=good, 4=weak, 5=no knowledge). **

To validate this section (1) and jump to the next one, click the button ‘Save draft and continue to next section’!

5.1.2. Details on Host Institution and Collaborating Institution(s)

Host Institution Details

The ‘Host Institution’ (HI) is the institution where the AFR beneficiary performs the **major part** of her/his research, i.e. at least 50% of the time has to be spent with the Host Institution (unless fieldwork is more than 50% and no other institution is involved). It is the responsibility of the applicants to find a suitable HI with a competent research group in their field.

The HI must offer office and/or laboratory space allowing the applicant to properly carry out the described research project.

The HI is an institution which is eligible to host AFR beneficiaries and which should provide employment contracts to AFR beneficiaries (see Section 3. for further details).

Mandatory information:

- Host Institution Details: * *Please select your Host Institution from the Drop Down List. If your institution is not listed, please enter the name into the Field ‘Name of Host Institution’.*

- Research Group: * *Official name (and acronym) of the research group in which the research project will be conducted.*
A description on the research framework for the postdoctoral project has to be attached in section 7.6 (max. 3 pages / research group), including:
 - *a general description of the research group;*
 - *an explanation on how the postdoctoral project fits into the general research objectives and, if applicable, integrates into a larger peer-reviewed multiannual project;*
 - *the organisation of the applicant's scientific guidance;*
 - *a description how the required material expenses and overheads will be covered.**In case the HI is a private company: Objectives of the project from the perspective of the private company and the contribution of the company to the project and to the training/career development of the applicant should also be included). Only in case of a private company, the research group may give names of competitors that should not be contacted as external reviewers for the project.*
- Percentage of Work Time Spent in HI: *
- Legal status of the HI: * *Choose from the Drop Down List (e.g. University; Public Research Institution or Private Company). In the case the Host Institution is a private company, the collaborating public research institution has to be indicated as '2nd collaborating institution'.*
- Address Details of the Research Group: * *Please provide full address for later correspondence.*
- Internet Site: * *Enter Internet site of research group.*

Administrative Contact Details of HI

The administrative contact is the contact person for the AFR contractual and administrative issues. In some cases, the administrative contact may be identical to the legal representative.

In case of a fellowship without an employment contract, the scientific contact may possibly take the role of administrative contact.

Mandatory information:

- Title: * *e.g. Dr, Prof., etc.*
- First Name: * *Given name of the administrative contact*
- Last Name: * *Surname of the administrative contact*
- E-mail: * *E-mail Address to be used for electronic correspondence*

Main Scientific Contact Details of HI

The main scientific contact is considered to be the academic advisor of the postdoc project. For **further information** on the requirements expected from the postdoctoral scientific guidance see **section 3.4**.

Only persons who play an active role in the applicant's scientific guidance should be listed in the application form as scientific contacts.

Note that each scientific contact listed in the application form has to provide a CV. In addition, a **confidential reference letter** from the main scientific contact of the Host Institution is **mandatory** (based on the template provided on www.fnr.lu/AFR).

Mandatory information:

- Title: * *e.g. Dr, Prof., etc.*
- First Name: * *Given name of the administrative contact*
- Last Name: * *Surname of the administrative contact*
- Research Group: * *Official name (and acronym) of the research group*
- Role in the Project: * *Scientific Advisor*
- E-mail: * *E-mail Address to be used for electronic correspondence*
- Personal Website: *if applicable*

2nd Scientific Contact Details of HI

In many institutions, the scientific guidance of Postdoc applicants is shared between two or more people. The main responsibility for the Postdoc is taken by the main scientific contact whereas the 'day-to-day' supervision is often done by another person in accordance with the main scientific advisor.

Please give below the details of the 2nd Scientific Contact at the HI actively involved in the project, if applicable. Note that each scientific contact listed in the application form has to provide a CV. Also, the FNR will have to receive at least one **confidential reference letter per research group by the main scientific contact** of the group (based on the template provided on www.fnr.lu/AFR).

Mandatory information:

- Title: * *e.g. Dr, Prof., etc.*
- First Name: * *Given name of the administrative contact*
- Last Name: * *Surname of the administrative contact*
- Research Group: * *Official name (and acronym) of the research group*
- Role in the Project: * *Scientific Contact (see above)*
- E-mail: * *E-mail Address to be used for electronic correspondence*
- Personal Website: *if applicable*

Collaborating Institution Details

A 'Collaborating Institution' is the institution where the AFR beneficiary performs a **part** of her/his research, i.e. less than 50% of the total project time may be spent at a collaborating institution. A collaborating institution could be for example a university, a public research institution, a public body, a private company, or a foundation with a research mission (see section 3.2). In addition, in case of an interdisciplinary work based solely in one institution, the second research group involved should be indicated as collaborating institution. *Do not add the Host Institution here as this information has already been communicated at 5.1.*

Mandatory information:

- Institution: * *Official name of the Collaborating Institution*
- Research Group: * *Official name (and acronym) of the research group in which the research project will be conducted*

A description on the research framework for the postdoctoral project has to be attached in section 7.6 (max. 3 pages / research group), including:

- a general description of the research group;*
- an explanation how the postdoctoral project fits into the general research objectives and, if applicable, integrates into a larger peer-reviewed multiannual project;*
- the organisation of the applicant's scientific guidance;*
- a description how the required material expenses and overheads will be covered.*

In case the HI is a private company: Objectives of the project from the perspective of the private company and the contribution of the company to the project and to the training/career development of the applicant should also be included). Only in case of a private company, the research group may give names of competitors that should not be contacted as external reviewers for the project.

- Administrative Contact: * *Name and Surname of the Administrative Contact at the Collaborating Institution. For each institution at least 1 administrative and 1 scientific contact must be added.*
- Scientific Contact: * *Name and Surname of the Scientific advisor at the Collaborating Institution. For each institution at least 1 administrative and 1 scientific contact must be added.*
- Website of Research Unit: *
- Legal status of the collaborating institution: * *Choose from the Drop Down List (e.g. University; Public Research Institution or Private Company)*
- Percentage of Work Time Spent in collaborating institution: *

Click the 'Add' button to validate and/or add new institutions.

Administrative and Scientific Contacts Details of Collaborating Institution(s)

Enter details of administrative and scientific contacts of each collaborating institution. *For each institution at least 1 administrative and 1 scientific contact must be added.*

Only persons who play an active role in the applicant's scientific guidance should be listed in the application form as scientific contacts.

Note that each scientific contact listed in the application form has to provide a CV. Also, the FNR will have to receive at least one **confidential reference letter per research group** by the main scientific contact of the group (based on the template provided on www.fnr.lu/AFR).

Mandatory information:

- Name of Institution: *
- Title: *
- First Name: *
- Surname: *
- Role in the Project: * *Scientific Contact or Administrative Contact*
- Email: *
- Personal Website:

Click the 'Add' button to validate and/or add new contacts.

Other Collaborations

Indicate any other (potential) partners in the project that are not formally collaborating, *for instance potential users of research results or other collaborators in Luxembourg or abroad (for example data providers etc.) that you intend to involve in the project, but are not yet formally involved. Indicate their potential role or interest in the project.*

To validate this section (2) and jump to the next one, click the button 'Save draft and continue to next section'!

5.1.3. Research Project and Project Framework

4.1.3.1 Research Project

- Project Title: * *Should not be longer than 20 words.*
- Project Acronym: * *The short title or acronym will be used to identify your proposal efficiently. Should not be longer than 10 characters.*
- Project Start: * *Effective start date of the postdoctoral project. In case the project has already started well before the AFR funding request (e.g. in case of a re-submission), the applicant must base her/his project description on the entire duration of the postdoc including the already achieved parts and possible changes or reorientations of the project.*
- Project End: * *Rough estimation of the total project duration.*
- Requested Start of AFR Funding: * *Effective start date of the funding. Note that the start of the project must occur at the latest on 1st July of the following year for proposals submitted in the autumn call and at the latest on 1st January of the following year for proposals submitted in the spring call. Otherwise the FNR might withdraw any offer of support.
Retroactive funding is possible until 1st of the month of the call deadline.*
- Total Months of requested AFR funding: * *Note that postdoctoral projects are normally funded for 2 years. The minimum duration of a requested project is 12 months.*
- Resubmission: * *Select 'Yes' if the project is a resubmission of a previous AFR project by the same applicant. Please indicate the former reference and title. Please add an additional page to your project description (max. 1 page), where you explain the modifications and describe how the reviewers' comments have been addressed. In addition (if possible), the resubmission should be based on the initial proposal by highlighting in a different colour any changes or additions that were made to the initial version. Please be aware that the re-submitted project will be evaluated by the same standards as "new" applications and in the competition of the new call. Thus, even if all points raised in the first synthesis have been addressed, the project might not be retained for funding.*

Project Abstract

- Publishable Project Abstract (max. 300 words): * *Short summary of your research proposal for FNR use. Note that the abstract is used in the recruitment process of external reviewers and should thus not include any confidential aspects of the planned research project! Furthermore, the FNR will publish the abstracts of successful applications in a project database on the FNR website.*

- Key Words Characterising the Research Project: * *up to 6 key words that you consider sufficient to characterise the scope of your proposal.*

Thematic Domain in the AFR Call

Please select only 1 of the following research domains from the list in the online system.

- BM – Life Sciences, Biology and Medicine
- ID – Humanities and Social Sciences
- IS – Information and Communication Technologies
- LE – Law, Economics, Finance
- MS – Materials, Physics and Engineering
- MT – Mathematics
- SR – Environmental and Earth Sciences

Primary and Secondary Domains of the Research Project (Level 1 and Level 2)

- Level 1: Life Sciences (LS)
Level 2:
 - LS1 Molecular and Structural Biology and Biochemistry
 - LS2 Genetics, Genomics, Bioinformatics and Systems Biology
 - LS3 Cellular and Developmental Biology
 - LS4 Physiology, Pathophysiology and Endocrinology
 - LS5 Neurosciences and Neural Disorders
 - LS6 Immunity and Infection
 - LS7 Diagnostic Tools, Therapies and Public Health
 - LS8 Evolutionary, Population and Environmental Biology
 - LS9 Applied Life Sciences and Biotechnology
- Level 1: Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Information and Communication, Engineering, Universe and Earth Sciences (PE)
Level 2:
 - PE1 Mathematical Foundations
 - PE2 Fundamental Constituents of Matter
 - PE3 Condensed Matter Physics
 - PE4 Physical and Analytical Chemical Sciences
 - PE5 Materials and Synthesis
 - PE6 Computer Science and Informatics
 - PE7 Systems and Communication Engineering
 - PE8 Products and Process Engineering
 - PE9 Universe Sciences
 - PE10 Earth System Science
- Level 1: Social Sciences and Humanities (SH)
Level 2:
 - SH1 Individuals, Institutions and Markets
 - SH2 Institutions, Values, Beliefs and Behaviour
 - SH3 Environment and Society
 - SH4 The Human Mind and its Complexity
 - SH5 Cultures and Cultural Production
 - SH6 The Study of the Human Past

A list with the descriptions of the Level 2 Domains (Subdomains) is provided on the FNR website.

Project Framework

For AFR projects which will be carried out in the framework of a greater multiannual project (e.g. institution-internal, national, European or international projects), it is essential that the proposal indicates explicitly and unequivocally what the individual contribution of the applicant in the frame of the greater project is.

In case two or more submitted projects are interlinked, it must emerge in a clear and transparent way who does what, who gets the credit for what (in terms of first authorships in publications), if and how a specific research project is affected in case the related proposal is not retained for funding, etc ([see also section 7.6.](#)).

Mandatory information:

- Project Title
- Funding Institution
- Researcher in Charge
- If FNR funded: [Reference Number](#)
- Project Start
- Project End
- Project Status: [Tick where appropriate](#)

To validate this section (3) and jump to the next one, click the button 'Save draft and continue to next section'!

5.1.4. Interest of the Research Project in the Luxembourg R&D Setting

Interest of the Research Project in the Luxembourg R&D Setting

The interest of the research project in the Luxembourg R&D setting is an essential eligibility and selection criterion.

The **personal link** with Luxembourg is only relevant for applicants who carry out their project at a HI outside Luxembourg. Within Luxembourg, applicants from any nationality without an earlier link to the country may apply (for further details see section 3.1 "Eligibility" in this document).

- Will you have an employment contact at a Luxembourgish Host Institution to conduct your postdoctoral research?: * [YES / NO](#)
- If **NO**: [Tick where appropriate, multiple answers possible.](#)
Personal link with Luxembourg: [You are a Luxembourgish national \(or a political refugee with a residence in the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg\) and/or have been a resident in Luxembourg for a minimum of 5 consecutive years. Certifying documents have to be uploaded under section 7.9. and please give additional comments below.](#)
AFR-PPP in collaboration with a public research institution outside Luxembourg; [at least 25 % of the project time is spent in the company in Luxembourg.](#)
Additional Comments: [Only required, in case of a personal link with Luxembourg](#)

To validate this section (4) and jump to the next one, click the button 'Save draft and continue to next section'!

5.1.5. Legal and Ethical Requirements

Ethical Issues and Data Protection

The FNR requests that applicants and their Host Institutions verify the ethical and data protection rules of the countries where they will carry out their research and that they comply with the rules and laws of these countries as well as the rules and laws of the European Union. Where a proposal requires approval by the relevant Research Body Ethics Committee, written evidence of such ethical approval will need to be obtained and available prior to start of that particular part of any successful research proposal (*see section 3.7. Ethical Issues*).

- Does the Project give rise to Ethical Issues (including the collection or handling of personal or sensitive data)? *Yes/No*
- Does the Project require approval by a relevant Research Body Ethics Committee (e.g. by the 'Commission Nationale de la Protection des Données (CNPd)' and/or 'Comité National d'Éthique de Recherche (CNER)')? *Yes/No. More info on www.cnpd.lu and www.cner.lu*
If applicable, approval(s) is/are required before the start of the project.
- If 'Yes' in one of the above, How will Ethical Issues be Addressed? *If the project gives rise to ethical issues, please briefly indicate what they consist in and how they will be addressed. In addition, the Ethical Issues Table attached to the Project Description Form must be completed.*
Ethical issues are not limited to issues indicated in the Ethical Issues Table or handled by the 'Commission Nationale de la Protection des Données' and/or the 'Comité National d'Éthique de Recherche' (see section Ethical Issues). The applicant should contact the department in charge of ethical issues in their institution(s) for support.
- Does the Project have specific data protection requirements? *Yes/No*
- If 'Yes', please indicate how these issues will be addressed? *If the project gives rise to specific data protection requirements, please briefly indicate what they consist in and how they will be addressed. The applicant should contact the department in charge of ethical issues in her/his research institution for support.*

To validate this section (5) and jump to the next one, click the button 'Save draft and continue to next section'!

5.1.6. Type of Grant

Type of Grant Requested

The FNR expects that all AFR **beneficiaries hosted at a Luxembourgish institution will receive an employment contract** to conduct their research studies. Applicants hosted in an institution abroad may apply to fellowships. For further information about the AFR contributions, please refer to section 3.5 as well as to the 'AFR Terms & Conditions'.

Applicants need to make sure before submission that the indications in the application form comply with the employment and employment contract rules of the Host Institution.

- Type of Grant requested: * *Choose one from the list:*

- Employment contract: *The HI will employ the AFR beneficiary to conduct her/his research studies.*
- Employment contract PPP: *Project will be carried out in or in collaboration with a private company in Luxembourg and the partners want to apply to the AFR-Public-Private-Partnership incentive. The AFR beneficiary may be employed either by the public or private Host Institution. Note that in this case **additional documents** have to be provided in section 7.8.*
In case of an AFR-PPP in collaboration with a public research institution outside Luxembourg, at least 25 % of the project time has to be spent at the Luxembourgish company.
- Fellowship (HI has no possibility to offer an employment contract to grant applicant): *Only in research institutions abroad if there is no possibility to offer an employment contract*
- Fellowship (the employment contract would result in a net salary for the beneficiary below 3/4 of the amount received with a stipend): *For example in countries where social security contributions are very high.*
- Time to be spent on the research project: * *Full-time / Part-time. Exceptionally AFR beneficiaries have the possibility to undertake their research as part-time. If AFR beneficiaries intend to do their postdoc on a part-time basis, a justification has to be provided in annex (7.9).*
- If part-time please specify: *50% or other (higher percentage): the part-time research must not be less than 50% of the normal working time and must comply with the Host Institution's part time policy.*

According to your choice made, please continue with either section 6.2 (in case of an employment contract) or section 6.3 (in case of a fellowship).

In case of an AFR-based Employment Contract

The AFR contribution to an employment contract has to be calculated by the Host Institution's personnel department, on the basis of the indications and documents submitted by the applicant in view of the preparation of the employment contract. Applicants should contact the Host Institution sufficiently in advance to receive the amounts that are required by the FNR in the application form. For further information regarding the maximum AFR contributions and rules please refer to the 'AFR Terms & Conditions'. *Enter the figure of the gross salary per month in Euro you will receive.*

The annual salary costs depend on the number of salary-months paid per year. It is not necessarily based on 12 salary months per calendar year. Certain countries apply 13 months as a rule. In Luxembourg, 13 salary months are current practice, but certain institutions may pay 12 months, 12.5 months or > 13 months. *Enter the figure of the full salary costs per month in Euro for the employer (including employers' charges to the social security). Figure to be provided by the Host Institution.*

Did you apply for any other grant for the AFR project period? *Researchers, who have been awarded a grant from an external source of funding for an individual fellowship similar to AFR may apply for AFR grants. However, in case of approval of the two grants, the full basic grant is paid by the FNR and a topping-up of the salary up to the maximum limit indicated in the*

Grand-Ducal Regulation⁸ may come from another source. The other source of funding needs to certify their awareness and agreement with the AFR grant (for further details see Terms and Conditions).

Please indicate hereafter the source of grant, the amount per month or year, the period, the status 'requested' or 'granted'.

In case of an AFR Fellowship

Did you apply for any other grant for the AFR project period? *Researchers, who have been awarded a grant from an external source of funding for an individual fellowship similar to AFR may apply for AFR grants. However, in case of approval of the two grants, the full basic grant is paid by the FNR and a topping-up of the AFR fellowship up to the maximum limit indicated in the Grand-Ducal Regulation⁹ may come from another source. The other source of funding needs to certify their awareness and agreement with the AFR grant (for further details see Terms and Conditions).*

Please indicate hereafter the source of grant, the amount per month or year, the period, the status 'requested' or 'granted'.

To validate this section (6) and jump to the next one, click the button 'Save draft and continue to next section'!

5.1.7. Attachments

Project Description of the Research Project*

In section 7.1 you have to '**Download the AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Project Description Form**'. By clicking on the hyperlink, you can download a WORD document, named 'AFR 2013-2 PDR Project Description Form' that may be saved to your desktop and completed off-line.

The 'Project Description Form' is part of a web-based online application and cannot be submitted alone. **The maximum number of 12 pages should be respected** (excluding the Cover Page, the Bibliography and list of abbreviations (max. 2 pages), the Ethical Issues Table, and Comments in case of a Resubmission (max. 1 page)); **otherwise the FNR may decide to only forward the first 12 pages to the external evaluators**. The **format instructions** given in the 'Project Description Form' have to be respected. After completion of the Word document, please convert it to PDF and upload it into the system. *Only PDF files can be uploaded!*

If you want to replace the file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Ideas and/or text belonging to others must be properly referenced, based on international standards. All applications will be checked for plagiarism and any misconduct may result in the immediate disqualification of the application (see AFR Terms & Conditions).

The Project Description should be a **scientifically oriented executive summary of your postdoctoral project**. The research proposal must describe the major work the applicant wishes to pursue: its precise nature, its purpose (research question), the proposed

⁸ Reglement Grand Ducal A162, 31st Oct. 2008

⁹ Reglement Grand Ducal A162, 31st Oct. 2008

methodology or approach, and the envisaged outcomes. In case the postdoctoral project has already started well before the AFR funding request, the applicant must base her/his project description on the entire duration of the study including the already achieved parts and possible changes or reorientations of the project. In case the PDR is part of a larger multiannual research project, clearly indicate how the AFR project contributes to the objectives of the greater project. Please also state the applicant's autonomy, in particular in view of the publication of results.

Please find hereafter the explanation of the different fields of the 'AFR MARIE-CURIE PDR Project Description Form':

1. Introduction and Literature Review
<i>Give a brief review of the literature in your research field, highlighting the scientific interest, including your own previous work (state-of-the-art), the ongoing developments, leading research groups in the field and the contribution you intend to make to the field.</i>
2. Hypothesis and/or Research Objectives
<i>Give a clear definition of the hypotheses of the research project and the objectives to be achieved in a realistic and, as far as possible, measurable form. Statement of the research questions and/or hypotheses: e.g. statement of the problem, purpose, significance of the project.</i>
3. Innovation/Originality
<i>What is the innovation/originality of the research project?</i>
4. Methodology
<i>Present the methodology to test the hypotheses and to reach the objectives defined above.</i>
5. Work Plan
<i>Describe the different stages of activities (i.e. workpackages, milestones) with the corresponding timetable (when?), location (where?) and collaborating research groups (with whom?), preferably in spreadsheet format. The work plan must typically be limited to a period of 2 years.</i>
6. Risks
<i>Indicate potential risks of your project and how you intend to prevent or address them.</i>
7. Expected Outcomes
<i>What are the expected project outcomes and mid- to long-term perspectives of your research? Briefly describe the purpose of the project and the envisaged outcome; including number of publications foreseen (1st author publication expected)</i>
8. Bibliography (short) and list of abbreviations (max. 2 pages)
<i>Please indicate the most relevant papers concerning your research question and methodology, as well as the main literature. Please highlight the most relevant 20 publications followed by the list of the other references. Each reference must include the names of all authors, the article and journal title, book title, publisher, volume number, page numbers and years of publications. If the document is available electronically, the website address should be mentioned too.</i>

9. Comment on Resubmission, only if applicable (max. 1 page)

Please add an extra page, where you explain the modifications and describe how the points raised in the panel synthesis have been addressed (max. 1 page, not within the page limit).

In addition, if possible, the resubmission should be based on the initial proposal by highlighting in a different colour any changes or additions that were made to the initial version.

Please be aware that the re-submitted project will be evaluated by the same standards as “new” applications and in the competition of the new call. Thus, even if all points raised in the first synthesis have been addressed, the project might not be retained for funding.

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Training Plan*

The FNR requests that the postdoctoral applicant has to provide a detailed training plan for the postdoc period. Any training activity has to be agreed on with the main scientific contact. *Please attach Training Plan in PDF Format (Maximum 4 pages).**

The plan should comprise:

- *Any scientific or methodological skills training envisaged, such as attendance in renowned scientific conferences, participation in summer schools, methodological training courses, etc. Please indicate title and dates as far as known.*
- *Applicants are strongly encouraged to improve their non-scientific skills through appropriate training courses, such as project management, ethics, International Property Rights (IPR), and soft skills such as communication, public speaking, grant writing, ...*
- *Training activities such as courses in the field of the promotion of scientific culture (communication of researchers with the public and other courses) as well as the practice of activities in collaboration with schools, the media, etc. should form part of any training programme of a postdoc researcher. These activities should also be included into the training plan in the application.*

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Personal Statement*

Please attach a **Letter of Intent** *(Maximum 1 page, in PDF Format. There is no template provided). Only PDF files can be uploaded! **

Postdoc applicants are evaluated on the benefit of their postdoctoral training and the mobility for their personal career development. *The statement should give the relevant arguments why the choice of host institution and project are the right ones at this moment of the research career of the applicant and how it enhances the professional research career. Please also include any other aspect of your professional or personal background that you consider of interest in the context of this application (scientific or other, e.g. awards, stays abroad hobbies, etc.).*

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Applicant's CV*

Please upload a **recent curriculum vitae for the applicant** (*Maximum 3 pages, in PDF Format*). *Only PDF files can be uploaded!*

*The CV should also list scholarly publications which have been authored (or co-authored) in bibliographic format appropriate to the discipline. Only peer-reviewed articles, publications or editions should be quoted. **

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Copies of Degree Certificates / Diplomas and Passport*

Please upload **copies of the requested documents** (*merge all documents in one PDF file*). *Only PDF files can be uploaded!*

Including:

1. Copy of PhD certificate *

Copy of official PhD certificate or a certificate from the awarding authority attesting that all conditions linked to the award of the PhD (including defense of the thesis) have been fulfilled. If an applicant is not in possession of a doctoral degree at the relevant call submission deadline (e.g. final PhD examination has not been passed yet), such a certificate must be provided the latest 1 month after the submission deadline otherwise the proposal will be turned down without further evaluation. In addition, applicants not in possession of a PhD at the relevant call submission deadline must join a statement by their PhD supervisor addressing this issue.

Please note that Medical Doctor (MD) studies are not taken as equivalent to PhD studies.

2. A statement of courses and marks ('relevé de notes') of the most recent degree. *

If no official statement is available, applicants should at least provide a list of courses attended.

3. Copy of Passport *

Copies of these documents may be submitted in English, French, or German. If in any other language, they must be translated into English, French or German and officially certified.

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Framework of the postdoctoral project: The Host Institution's and collaborating institution's research group(s)*

Besides the Project Description (7.1), the description of the research framework of the postdoctoral project forms a very important basis for the evaluation of the application. The quality of the scientific advisor(s) and the research group as well as how the applicants'

scientific guidance and training will be organised will be ranked. Applicants are advised to consult with their main scientific contact(s) to prepare this section.

Please attach the description of the research framework of the postdoctoral project for each involved research group (max. 3 pages / research group). Merge all documents in one PDF file, starting with the HI. Only PDF files can be uploaded!

Including:

- 1. A general description of the research group (incl. number of researchers, main scientific achievements, scientific collaborations...)*
- 2. An explanation on how the postdoc fits into the general research objectives of the research group and, if applicable, how it integrates into a larger peer-reviewed multiannual project. In the latter case clearly indicate how the AFR project contributes to the objectives of the larger project. Please also state the applicant's autonomy, in particular in view of the publication of the results.*
- 3. Details about how the scientific guidance and training of the applicant is organised. In case of a joint project, indicate the role of each scientific advisor and research group involved and provide details on the time spend in each group.*
- 4. Indication on the training foreseen and which parts can be covered at the institutions.*
- 5. A description how the required material expenses and overheads will be covered. Where the funding decision of a larger multiannual project is still pending, please state if and how the postdoctoral project will be affected in case the funding for the multiannual project is declined.*

*In addition, in case the **HI is a private company**: Describe the objectives of the project from the perspective of the private company and the contribution of the company to the project and to the training/career development of the applicant should also be included). Only in case of a private company, the research group may give names of competitors that should not be contacted as external reviewers for the project.*

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Scientific advisors'(s') CV(s)*

Please upload a **recent curriculum vitae for scientific advisor** in the project into the system (*max. 4 pages/CV merged into a single PDF File. There is no template provided*). *Only PDF files can be uploaded!*

Please include:

- 1. The number of supervised doctoral and postdoctoral projects as supervisor/scientific advisor **
- 2. Information about the outcomes of the last three supervised PhDs und Postdocs (finished, including drop-outs): name, duration, success, dissemination (i.e. publications, conferences, patents, public talks...), and career track of candidates, if applicable**
- 3. List of most recent publications (not more than 10) **
- 4. List of invited talks at international conferences **
- 4. Information on acquired external funding **
- 5. List of own most relevant patents, if applicable*

Note that FNR will have to receive at least one **confidential letter of reference** per research group named in the application (based on the template provided on www.fnr.lu/AFR). Letter of Reference from the main scientific contact of the Host Institution and the collaborating institution(s) are mandatory. The reference letter must be sent directly to the FNR via e-mail (afr@fnr.lu), fax or postal mail by the referee and **must arrive before the call deadline**.

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Public-Private Partnership Incentive (if applicable)

A financial incentive is paid to beneficiaries who are conducting their research in collaboration with an accredited private company active in R&D in Luxembourg. In order to be eligible as an 'accredited' private firm, companies need to have an accreditation ('agrément') by the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

In case you apply for a Public-Private Partnership Incentive, please attach the following documents:

1. Summary (Term sheet) of the contract between a public research body and a private company, including an Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) agreement. *(max. 1 page) It should summarise the essential terms of the agreement in common language. Please indicate how the authorship of the publications and the management and access to the data sets are settled amongst the project partners. Note that each AFR is expected to publish at least one peer-reviewed paper. In projects with a potentially commercial orientation, the possibility of using the IPR through patenting or others should be envisaged.*
2. Copy of the official accreditation of the private company by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, if not already submitted to the FNR. *Only to be submitted if the private partner has not already submitted the accreditation in a former AFR application. If the official accreditation is not yet available, proof must be provided that it has been applied for (see section 3.6 of these guidelines).*

Please merge the documents into one single PDF file and upload the PDF file.

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Additional Documents

The following documents are to be submitted only if applicable. *Please merge all required documents for your application into one single PDF file and upload the PDF file.*

Documents required in case of:

- Applications hosted outside Luxembourg: *Documents certifying the link with Luxembourg (e.g. 'Certificate of residence in Luxembourg'; for political refugees in addition, a document certifying their status of political refugee acc. to Art. 23 of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, signed at Geneva on 28/07/1951)*
- Part-time requested: *Justification (max. 1 page/ PDF format) In exceptional cases, AFR beneficiaries have the possibility to undertake their research as part-time. If AFR beneficiaries intend to do their postdoc on a part-time basis, a justification has to be provided indicating the reasons for the part-time request, explaining how the postdoctoral project will be followed and how a finalisation will be ensured. Furthermore, it should be specified if the*

part-time is scientifically justifiable. Note that you scientific advisor should comment on the part-time request in the confidential reference report.

Further information should be requested from the AFR programme manager in charge of your domain before submitting the proposal.

- Statement by PhD supervisor: *Mandatory for applicants not in possession of a PhD at the relevant call submission deadline.*
- Reference letter for the applicant by former supervisor / scientific advisor: *Applicants may add reference letters of former supervisors or scientific advisor. Please note that such documents are not mandatory (no template provided).*

No other documents should be uploaded in this section. Any excess documents included in this section (esp. as an annex of the project description) will be disregarded during the evaluation.

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Project Partner Signatures *

Download the 'AFR Applicant's and Host Institution's Joint Declaration.pdf' from the FNR website.

The document has to be completed and signed by the legal representative of the Host Institution. In case of a fellowship (without employment contract), the declaration may be signed by the administrative or scientific responsible of the institution authorised to decide upon the acceptance of research fellows by the institution. The position/function of the signing responsible in the Host Institution has to be indicated and the official stamp of the HI must be put on the declaration.

The signed and stamped Joint Declaration has to be scanned and uploaded to the online submission system.

If you want to replace a file already uploaded, please REMOVE it first, before uploading the new file to the system.

Declaration *

Please tick the box: "I hereby declare that this proposal conforms to the call guidelines and the 'FNR Research Integrity Guidelines'."

To validate this section and jump to the next one, click the button 'Save draft and continue to next section'!

If you have finished filling in the different sections of your 'Online Application Form', please click on the button named '**Form fully completed and ready for PDF generation**'. You may as well choose to modify the entered data by clicking on the button named 'Enter more details now'.

Finally, press the button '**Done**' to validate the completion of the task and make it disappear from your 'To Do' list.

Ensure that you correctly filled all sections of the application form. The system partially warns you of mandatory sections but put a special attention on the completeness of documents that need to be uploaded.

The third task of Step 1 is to generate a PDF document that contains all the information of your 'Online Application Form'. Click on the hyperlink named '**Generate Full Proposal PDF**'. The PDF document will appear in the documents list on the right side of the screen. If the document named 'Generated PDF' does not appear in the list after a few minutes, please click on the refresh button of your browser.

Before submitting the application, applicants are advised to check the generated Pdf for completeness and correctness! (Fourth task)

5.2. Step 2: Submitting the Online Application Form

After having generated the report in PDF format, please open the document and check if it is complete and correct. Especially ensure that the right uploads have been attached.

To finally submit the application click the button '**Submit to FNR**'.

Applicants must submit their application in electronic format to the online submission system (FNR Grant Management System) <https://grants.fnr.lu> no later than 14:00 (CET) on **the deadline**.

Incomplete applications, missing letters of reference and/or late submissions will make the application non eligible and the application will be turned down without further evaluation!

If you need further advice and support, please contact your FNR-AFR Programme Assistant.