

SFI Public Service Fellowship Call 2023 FAQs

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START DATES:

Q: If I am successful in the Public Service Fellowship 2023 call, when can I expect to start my fellowship?

A: SFI expects that the Fellowship applications submitted for the 5th October 2023 deadline will commence in Q1 2024. Please note that placements are expected to commence within 6 months of the notification of the award and, in some cases, placements will need to commence as soon as possible.

HOST ORGANISATIONS:

Q: Is there a possibility of working with a Host Organisation that is not listed in the Public Service Fellowship programme call document?

A: Applicants can apply to work on one of 42 projects within the 18 Host Organisations for this call as listed on the call website. There is no option to include projects or Host Organisations that are not included in the 2023 call.

Q: Is it possible to apply to more than one project or more than one Host?

A: Applicants are permitted to apply to work on one project and only one application to the SFI Public Service Fellowship 2023 call is permitted per applicant.

ELIGIBLE COSTS:

Q: What costs are supported by this programme?

A: Eligible costs for this programme include salary or teaching buy-out for the applicant, where relevant, and a mobility allowance as outlined in the call document. All other costs for equipment and other staffing are not permitted.

Q: I am a Senior Lecturer and intend to apply to the Public Service Fellowship Programme. How do I calculate teaching buy-out and will a replacement staff member at the same level be covered by the Fellowship Award?

A: Teaching buy-out costs should be calculated based on hiring a temporary lecturer (e.g. at point 1 on the Assistant Lecturer salary scale, or equivalent point on the institutional scale) regardless of the seniority of the Academic Fellow applying to the Public Service Fellowship Programme. Full justification should be included in the Budget justification section of the application, including details of how many teaching hours per week the temporary lecturer is required.

Q: Is mobility allowance only for applicants based outside Dublin (for placements in Dublin) or can Dublin-based applicants also apply for it?

A: Mobility allowance is not intended to support short distance daily commuting. Therefore, it is unlikely that applicants based locally to the project that they are applying for will be eligible to apply for it.

Q: I am a Research Officer and intend to apply to the Public Service Fellowship Programme. Which category do I apply under and how do I calculate costs?

A: Research Office Staff and SFI Research Centres administration staff should apply to the programme under Category A. Buy-out costs should be requested to cover the hiring of a temporary research officer or other administrative position. It is expected that the buy-out costs are calculated at point 1 on the relevant scale. Full justification should be included in the Budget justification section of the application and should include reference to the relevant salary scale.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Q: Do applicants need to have officially graduated at the time of application deadline? What does SFI consider as the official date of a PhD award?

A: Yes. PhD must have been conferred at the time of application. The official date is defined as the day, month and year that the degree was conferred, i.e. the year printed on the official PhD certificate. Verification of this official date by the awarding research body must be available upon request.

Q: Is a PhD in a STEM discipline an eligibility requirement to apply?

A: Not in all cases. In the case of some of the STEM-relevant projects, a PhD in a non-STEM discipline is eligible to apply for those projects that require non-STEM expertise. Please refer to the project outlines for further details on the skills/expertise required prior to preparing your application.

Q: I am a lecturer on a temporary contract at an eligible Research body. Can I apply?

A: Yes. Faculty staff on temporary contracts can apply. A Faculty researcher is defined as a researcher who holds a PhD at the time of application and who is currently employed as a permanent or temporary academic staff member of an eligible Irish Research Body (e.g. Lecturers, associate and full professors).

Q: Are applications from administrative staff in SFI Centres or Research offices permitted?

A: The main objective of the programme is to enhance collaboration of the research community with Government bodies. Administrative staff in SFI Research Centres or in Research Offices may be considered if they meet all eligibility criteria and possess the requisite skills outlined in the relevant project outline.

Q: Can a researcher carry out a Fellowship through an eligible Irish Research Body that is different from the Applicant's current employer?

A: Yes. If an applicant is currently employed at an eligible Research Body and is intending to move to another Research Body, the application must be submitted through the prospective employing Research Body, and not the current one.

Q: Can researchers working in a STEM area (e.g. data analytics) but currently based in a non-STEM faculty e.g. Business School) apply for this fellowship?

A: Eligibility is based on the qualifications of the applicant; a STEM researcher currently working in a business school would therefore be eligible to apply, once all other criteria met.