

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE RESEARCH FOUNDATION – FLANDERS

Call for scientific joint exchange projects for the period 2021-2022

In compliance with the Agreement on Scientific Cooperation signed by the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) and the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) on the 28th of August 2019, Parties agree upon the following provisions. Present guide for applicants sets the selection and evaluation procedures and financial guidelines of joint exchange projects under the above agreement for the period of 2021-2022.

Co-operative actions are based upon the principle of reciprocity for the mutual benefit of both Parties.

I. Definition, aim of the collaboration

Joint exchange projects are performed with the participation of research teams of both Taiwan and Flanders and have a **duration of two years**.

Proposals for joint exchange projects between researchers from Flanders and Taiwan can be submitted for **fundamental research in all scientific domains** with the objective of increasing and developing cooperation between the scientific communities of the Parties, with special attention to the exchange of junior researchers within the framework of joint exchange projects.

Joint exchange projects should:

- a) encourage bilateral fundamental research,
- b) promote the exchange of knowledge, and
- c) promote the implementation of joint research activities.

II. Guidelines for applicants

The proposals should meet the usual requirements for scientific research quality and meet the specific requirements for scientific cooperation projects of the funding organisation (FWO / MOST) they are submitted to. **Please be aware that the guidelines as stated in this document are to be respected by both the Flemish and the Taiwanese research team(s).**

Application:

In order to be eligible, a proposal must meet the following criteria:

- Projects must be endorsed by **Principal Investigators (PIs) (one Taiwanese and one Flemish)** duly authorized to conduct research and providing the guarantees on the operational (financial) resources. Principal Investigators (Flemish as well as Taiwanese) are required to have a PhD degree to submit a proposal;
- In Flanders, PIs must hold, throughout the entire period of the project, an appointment of at least 50% at:
 - a university in the Flemish Community (including the academic programmes within the corresponding association), or to;
 - a federal or Flemish scientific institute as scientific staff of the Dutchspeaking community, or to;
 - a university hospital in the Flemish Community as scientific staff, or to;
 - a hospital with an academic character recognized as research center in the Flemish Community as scientific staff.
- In Taiwan, PIs are required to conform to the Principal Investigator qualifications of General Research Projects of the MOST (for additional information, please visit the MOST-website: <https://www.most.gov.tw/most/attachments/920c4b8e-21d4-4d2b-b603-5602690c575e?>);
- Proposals must be **submitted simultaneously at FWO by the PI in Flanders and at MOST by the PI in Taiwan**, respecting the submission deadline and by using the respective application forms of the Parties. In Flanders the proposal can only be submitted according to the regulations of FWO. In Taiwan the proposal can only be submitted according to the regulations of MOST;
- Proposals must be **written in English** jointly by the PI in Flanders and the PI in Taiwan. The title, names of the Flemish and Taiwanese PI's, project description, methodology, work packages, etc. in the research proposal submitted by the Flemish and Taiwanese PI should be identical;
- In Flanders: The Flemish PI should submit the form 'Application for international cooperation programmes' (to be found on the FWO website) to interprog@fwo.be;
- In Taiwan: The Taiwanese PI needs to log in to the MOST website (<https://www.most.gov.tw>) to apply;
- In addition, **all members of the Taiwanese and the Flemish teams** should have or create an account on the [FWO e-portal](#) and keep their publication list up to date;
- Number and duration of visits must be indicated in the application form, duly justified, including as much as possible the estimated dates, names of the involved researchers and the estimated budget;
- **Please note that in each joint exchange project, at Flemish side as well as at Taiwanese side, at least one junior researcher should be involved and perform a visit.** This junior researcher is supposed to be a PhD student or a postdoctoral researcher with no more than 6-year postdoctoral experience, counted from the date of obtaining the doctoral degree;

- Principal Investigators are responsible for the management of the funds provided by their respective organisations, and should mutually agree on the number of visiting days each year.

FWO and MOST will check whether the proposals have been submitted both in Flanders and Taiwan and inform each other of the eligibility. Lack of submission of the application to one of the parties will cause the application to be considered ineligible.

Funding principles:

At Flemish side, the Principal Investigator may apply for a total of 6 months per project (for the entire project duration of 2 years). This annual quota can be divided into maximum 6 visits per year.

At Taiwanese side, there is no limitation regarding the number of visits and the duration of the visits. However, the maximum financial contribution for Taiwanese researchers is NT\$ 240,000 per project per year.

The funding shall be used to cover the airfare, accommodation costs and daily allowance of the researchers involved in the project.

Visits shall be funded as follows:

- for the Taiwanese researchers travelling to Flanders, MOST shall cover the travel expenses, including round-trip (economy class) airfare tickets from Taiwan to Flanders and government's insurance, which is not a health insurance, for NT\$ 4 million, as well as living expenses including accommodation costs and a daily allowance. For more information, please visit the MOST-website: <https://mycloud.most.gov.tw/public.php?service=files&t=y7T1osJ3Sz67Gizs2ujKWAGbyQIWLjDdzUOO9rShiEQiZMaYIF6QMkNy0eRCNH2t> ;
- for the Flemish researchers travelling to Taiwan, FWO shall cover a daily allowance of 66 euros/day (or max. 1,650 euros/month) on top of the travel expenses towards/from Taiwan, to be booked through [a travel agency authorized by the FWO](#).

If the cost of living changes significantly both Parties will, in accordance with the legal regulations in their respective countries, seek for means to adjust the allowances.

During their travel and stay abroad, all researchers (from the Flemish as well as from the Taiwanese research teams) involved in MOST-FWO projects and independent of nationality, can rely on a travel and assistance insurance ('reis- en bijstandsverzekering') and repatriation covered by FWO. This insurance is not a health insurance. Regardless of the aforementioned insurance, all researchers should have a valid health insurance entitling the holder to free emergency medical treatment in the host country.

The responsibility for the provision of adequate insurance against accidents that may occur during the stay in the host country ('arbeidsongevallenverzekering') rests with the research institution to which the researcher stays affiliated during the joint exchange project. The research institution to which the researcher is travelling, shall provide the visitor with all indispensable organisational assistance in situations requiring such steps.

Evaluation:

Eligible applications are evaluated separately by FWO and MOST according to their own evaluation mechanisms. More information on these procedures can be found on the respective websites of MOST and FWO during the application period.

Based on the evaluation, proposals are classified and ranked by MOST and FWO in order to jointly select the projects recommended for funding. Only projects evaluated positively by both Parties can be funded.

Ex-post evaluation of joint exchange projects:

Following the end of the funding period Principal Investigators are required to submit a project report based on the results of the project with reference to the research and financial plan described in the application form.

III. Procedures for exchange visits in the frame of exchange projects

1. Individual visits in the frame of two-year MOST-FWO projects need to obtain an approval from both Parties.

In order to obtain such visit approval:

- the involved Flemish researcher needs to apply (at least two months before departure) at FWO with the 'notification of a stay abroad' form which can be downloaded at the FWO website;
 - the involved Taiwanese researcher needs to apply (at least two months before departure) at MOST with the 'notification of a stay abroad' form which can be downloaded at the MOST website.
2. The sending Party should provide the host Party with all the details concerning the planned visit and the involved researcher(s), hereby requesting a final approval of the visit towards the host country.
 - Flemish researchers should detail in the 'notification for a stay abroad' form the first name and surname of the researcher(s) involved, grades, actual work position, place of work, specialisation, languages skills, dates of the stay abroad, travel means, address of stay abroad, and a detailed scientific programme of their stay abroad. The request should include an invitation letter of the host institution of the receiving country.
 - Taiwanese researchers should provide the same researcher information to the receiving country in accordance with FWO's practice.
 3. Beneficiaries of this Agreement may not receive remuneration for their activities in the host country during their stay funded by the exchange project.

IV. Time schedule

- Launch of the new call for applications: 25th of February 2020
- **Deadline for submission: 5th of May 2020**
 - o At FWO: 5 pm Belgian time
 - o At MOST: 12 am Taiwanese time
- Evaluation procedure: May-November 2020
- Final joint selection and communication of the results: November-December 2020
- Start of projects: 1st of January 2021

V. Contact information

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