



Questions & Answers from the IVVN ECR Fellowship Webinar: 16 January 2025

1. Supporting Letter from External Researcher

- a. Can the external researcher be from any country, like China, India, or the UK?
 - *Yes, they can.*

- b. Is the supporting letter supposed to come from someone working only in the animal vaccine field?
 - *No, it doesn't necessarily have to come from someone working in the animal vaccine field.*

- c. Does the external researcher need to be based in the UK?
 - *No, the external researcher does not need to be based in the UK.*

- d. Are there specific eligible countries for the external support letter?
 - *No, the external researcher supporting letter can be from any country.*

2. Eligibility

- a. What is the age limit or career stage? Are senior professionals eligible?
 - *There is no age limit. This fellowship is aimed at people who have postdoctoral experience but have not yet reached the stage of having their own research lab.*

- b. How many years post-PhD is allowed?
 - *There is no limit on years post-PhD. Please see answer 2a for more details.*

- c. What is the minimum academic qualification required to apply for this fellowship?
 - *The minimum academic qualification is PhD level as standard. However, we are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants. If applicants can provide evidence of sufficient alternative research experience, then applications from persons that don't hold a PhD may be considered. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers and research technical professionals.*

- d. I'm a first-year PhD student in Veterinary Science, and my research focuses on veterinary vaccinology. Am I eligible?
- Yes. However, you will have to provide evidence of sufficient research experience as described in answer 2c.
- e. Should the applicant be a regular employee in an institute? Are there any specific conditions?
- *As long as the host institute is able to provide a supporting letter which states they will be able to support the applicant for the duration of the fellowship period, then there are no other conditions.*
- f. I finished my PhD in 2020; am I eligible to apply for this fellowship?
- *There is no limit on time since PhD, please see answer 2a.*

3. Host Institution* and Mentorship

**The host institution is the institution where the applicant works.*

- a. Should the host institution be in the applicant's home country for the entire 18 months?
- *Yes, the fellow will remain at their host institution for the duration of the fellowship. There may be additional funding available for lab exchanges.*
- b. How can I find a mentor in structural biology?
- *You do not need to find a mentor for the fellowship scheme, the IVVN will identify a mentor for you. As a mentor is not disciplinary specific it may not be someone in your specified area of interest.*
- c. For the host supervisor, what kind of support letter is required? Could you elaborate on what they need to address (e.g., training research skills and learning new techniques)?
- d. Can you explain more about the support letter from the host institute?
- e. Does the host need to ensure time commitment to fellowship activities, or just confirm the applicant's current postdoc contract (usually fixed term)?
- *Your host institution needs to provide support for you to attend fellowship activities as this will take time away from being in the laboratory/doing research.*
 - *It would be good to see the host's support for your career development and hence application for the fellowship.*
- f. Can an applicant suggest specific courses or workshops to attend in their application?
- *Yes, please suggest this in section 6 of the application form.*

4. Relocation and Training

- a. If the fellowship is granted, is relocation required? Does it matter where the applicant lives?
 - *No, relocation is not required, it is a remote fellowship. It does not matter where the applicant lives.*
- b. Can an applicant stay at their home institution and attend 3–4 months of training in their external mentor's lab?
 - *The applicant will stay at their home institution. The fellowship does not include extensive training at a mentor's laboratory. However, there may be the opportunity to apply for additional funding to do lab exchanges, although this is not guaranteed.*
- c. How will the in-person training work? Are there any tentative plans?
 - *We are aware the in-person training will take time out of the fellow's work schedule including travel so we will therefore ensure all in-person training is efficient, for example we will ensure training will run over several days.*
 - *Plans are already underway for the launch event in Vienna which will be a two-day event, the first day will focus on mentorship, meeting the external mentors and getting to know the cohort, the second day will focus on training, likely focusing on career vision.*

5. Funding and Budget

- a. Is there a monthly stipend included with the fellowship?
 - *There is no monthly stipend for this fellowship.*
- b. What is the budget limit for personal training activities?
 - *Budget for training activities will be on a case-by-case basis. Much of the training will be organised directly by the IVVN management team.*
- c. Are there opportunities to apply for pump-priming funding?
 - *There may be opportunities throughout the 18 months for cohort specific small projects, although this is not guaranteed.*

6. Evaluation Process

- a. What is the weightage of previous publications in the application evaluation process?
 - *There is no weightage per se, IVVN would like to see a holistic approach to outputs from research, this could also involve presentations given, public engagement, webinars, tools produced etc.*

- b. Is there a limit to the number of applicants for the fellowship?
 - *IVVN plans to make upto 10 fellowship awards. Awards will only be made to applicants considered to meet the requirements of the fellowship so the numbers will depend on the applications received.*

7. Other Opportunities

- a. For future IVVN research funding calls (like lab exchanges), will only ECR fellows from this cohort be eligible to apply?
 - *No, there may be specific opportunities within the fellow's cohort, but IVVN still intends to run funding calls for the wider IVVN community.*
- b. Could you elaborate on the One Health mentoring scheme for ECRs?
 - *This is a separate scheme through the Royal Veterinary College that will be advertised in due course. The mentoring part of the IVVN fellowship scheme will involve both experts led 1:1 mentoring as well as peer-to-peer mentoring within the cohort.*

8. Participation in IVVN and IVIS Events

- a. Can I apply for funding to attend IVIS 2025? I am submitting my abstract.
- b. Can you support my participation in the IVIS Symposium if it's for the same topic already presented at the last IVVN conference?
- c. Can we attend the IVVN Symposium?
 - *This webinar does not focus on funding for IVIS 2025, please visit their website and look out in the IVVN newsletter for future opportunities in terms of IVVN funding for IVIS 2025.*

9. Specific Questions from Attendees

- a. I am a Bioinformatician and would like to apply in the bioinformatics domain. Could you guide me on this?
 - *If your bioinformatics research has a focus on veterinary vaccinology IVVN would welcome your application.*
 - *If you have significant experience as a research technician within veterinary vaccinology prior to starting your PhD, then you would be eligible. If you have less experience prior to starting your PhD, you may want to consider waiting until your PhD has been completed.*