

MTA PREMIUM POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences launches a call for applications to obtain premium postdoctoral researcher fellowships between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2022

Objectives and form of funding

The President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, hereinafter referred to as MTA) launches a call for applications to obtain premium postdoctoral support under the MTA Premium Postdoctoral Research Program to be used at research institutions of MTA's research centres and independent research institutes as well as Hungarian universities and Hungarian public collections and public institutions conducting scientific research according to their statutes (together: host institutions) within the framework of a fixed employment contract of 36 months for Hungarian and foreign researchers.

The objectives of the grant are:

- to provide opportunity for young researchers with scientific degree from acknowledged foreign and domestic universities, with internationally acclaimed scientific results and research programme of outstanding quality to conduct their research at the best Hungarian scientific research centres;
- to offer support to successful participation in other programs of excellence (e.g. ERC, Lendület “Momentum” Programme);
- to support the mobility of the young generation of researchers: to involve foreign researchers in domestic research, and to help young researchers returning from abroad to be involved in the work of Hungarian centres of research.

The budget earmarked for the Premium Postdoctoral Research Program 2019 under the appropriation which, in Annex 1 of the Act L of 2018 on the Central Budget of Hungary for the Year 2019, has been reallocated from Chapter XVII “Ministry of Innovation and Technology” Title 20 “Chapter-managed appropriations”, Subtitle 66 “Research and Development Tasks”, Article 5 “Support for Research Programs” to Chapter XXXIII “Hungarian Academy of Sciences”, Title 6 “Chapter-managed appropriations”, Subtitle 9 “Support for Postdoctoral Programs”, is expected to be of HUF 80 million for 2019, to be used for the funding of the employment of approximately 27 postdoctoral researchers, with starting dates between 1st September 2019 and 1st November 2019. It is a precondition for the actual transfer of the amounts of the awards due to be paid in 2020 and the years afterwards that the budget earmarked for the implementation of the Postdoctoral Research Program in the central budget of the year concerned should be placed at the disposal of MTA.

Supported postdoctoral researchers will be provided a monthly gross salary of HUF 600,000 for a period of 36 months from 1st September 2019 upon an employment contract concluded with the respective academic research centres or research institutes or MTA's Office for Research Groups Attached to Universities and Other Institutions (hereinafter referred to as MTA TKI) provided that the actual central budgetary resources are available for this purpose.

Furthermore, in order to achieve their research objectives, applicants may also request funding for operational and investment expenses in the maximum annual gross amount of HUF 2.4 million, which can be spent on equipment, direct operational costs, participation at conferences, travel and accommodation expenses, etc.

Conditions of application

Researchers may perform their research during the funding period from 1st September 2019 to 31st August 2022 at their respective host institutions. MTA Supported Research Groups and Lendület “Momentum” Groups may not be host institutions.

The call is open for both Hungarian and foreign nationals. In order to be eligible to apply, researchers shall meet the following requirements:

- they must be aged under 40 as of 1st September 2019 (born after 31st August 1979);
- they must have experience in conducting research, to be proved by publication list, citation data, number of grants awarded etc.;
- they must hold a PhD or a DLA degree obtained in their special field from one of the most prestigious foreign or domestic universities.

At the time of their application applicants must have already the certificate attesting the award of their doctorate or in the event that they have not yet received the certificate before the application, they must be able to demonstrate the fact that the University Doctoral Council have already passed the decision on the award of the doctorate.

- Under the relevant legal provisions the starting date of the first postdoctoral employment must fall within 5 years of obtaining one’s doctoral degree. Basic rules of the postdoctoral employment are set out in Government Decree 156/1997 (IX. 19.). Applicants who have had any former postdoctoral employment must provide evidence of this fact when submitting their application.

Researchers raising a child shall be granted an age limit extension of 2 years per child, maximum of 4 years as an extension to the standard age limit or as an extension to the starting date of the first postdoctoral employment where prior to the submission of the application the researcher has received childcare benefit based on the Act LXXXIV of 1998 on Family Support or has received pecuniary health insurance benefits for childcare purposes pursuant to the Act LXXXIII of 1997 on the Benefits of Compulsory Health Insurance excluding sick pay. Applicants must provide evidence of their eligibility for the age limit extension in the documentation of their application.

Eligibility criteria for recipients of postdoctoral support

The premium postdoctoral research shall be conducted within the framework of a full-time employment contract from 1st September 2019 until 31st August 2022 with one of MTA’s research centres or research institutes or - where the host institution is a university, a public collection or any other public institution - with MTA TKI. This fellowship does not support any part-time or other types of employment. Postdoctoral researchers during their postdoctoral employment are required to dedicate at least 80 per cent of their full working time (at least 0.8 FTE) to the postdoctoral research work undertaken in their application, and their involvement in any other projects has to be planned in such a way that the overall FTE value may not exceed 1 in any period during the Premium Postdoctoral Research Program.

Postdoctoral researchers who have been awarded this fellowship may not receive any other postdoctoral grants or research fellowships or lecturer’s fellowships which may be used to cover personnel costs. Applicants must declare at the time of submitting their application that during their postdoctoral employment under this fellowship scheme they will not receive any other postdoctoral grants or research fellowships or lecturer’s fellowships which may be used to cover personnel costs. In case the applicant has applied to more than one postdoctoral support scheme and has been awarded more than one fellowship, they must decide which support they opt for and they have to notify the President of MTA about their choice. MTA will terminate the postdoctoral research support under this fellowship scheme if it learns from duly substantiated information that

the applicant has obtained and used any further postdoctoral support which may be used to cover personnel costs.

Under this fellowship scheme it is not possible to delay the starting date of the postdoctoral employment by more than 2 months.

In all their scientific publications produced during the award period, postdoctoral researchers have to indicate their host institution (MTA's research centre or research institute, university, public collection or public institution) as their affiliation and have to make reference to the MTA Premium Postdoctoral Research Program.

Successful applicants are required to obtain scientific results by the end of the support period that are publishable in leading international journals. Furthermore, they are required to apply for international grants in their research field supported by the Premium Postdoctoral Research Program to be realized in Hungary, or – depending on their field of research – initiate cooperation to utilize their results with various enterprises or other organizations actively participating in research and development.

Successful applicants must prepare yearly reports on the scientific and financial aspects of their research work done during the relevant period of the postdoctoral support. Interim progress reports are to be evaluated by the relevant professional committees of MTA's Council of Research Institutes. The indicative qualification of the progress reports can be "successful" or "not successful". In the case of "not successful" qualification of the progress report, further support may be discontinued.

A final report on scientific output and a final financial report as well as a communication summary shall be submitted by the fellowship holder within two months following the end of the three-year postdoctoral employment term. Communication summaries will be published by MTA in a separate volume.

Requirements of the application regarding form and content

Applicants shall submit their application via MTA's online application website (https://palyazat.mta.hu/premium_2019). The MTA's application website can be entered by using the username and password valid for MTA Akadémiai Adattár (the Academy's Database, hereinafter referred to as AAT; <https://aat.mta.hu>), which means that prior to application the applicant must register to AAT and has to complete or upload the most important data which may also be used for the application itself.

In case the applicant has not registered in AAT yet, registration can be done along the lines of Guide 1.

Parts of the application

Forms to be completed on the application website

- *Applicant's data* page: main data of the applicant, which are automatically retrieved from the AAT and these data should and can only be modified in the AAT. To ensure that the data used are up-to-date, applicants are requested to update their data in the AAT, where relevant. Provided that the applicants have uploaded their publication and citation data into the Hungarian Scientific Publication Database (Magyar Tudományos Művek Tára, hereinafter referred to as MTMT), the link is to be uploaded here as well.
- *Application data* page: significant application data and applicant's data which are not included in the AAT, among others the summary of the research concept (basic issues, objectives and importance of the research) in maximum of 1500 characters. At the Application data page please indicate two experts – one Hungarian and preferably one foreign expert – who

could provide reference regarding the applicant's previous scientific output and the applicant's research theme described in the application. Applicants are also invited to name at least three experts – preferably foreign researchers or Hungarian researchers living abroad – who may be prepared to review the application in line with high professional standards and who appear not to be in any conflict of interest. The applicant may – without giving reasons - at the same time name persons whom he/she would not like to have as reviewers of his/her application.

Documents to enclose as attachments

(The templates for the attachments – Host institution declaration, Applicant's declaration – can be downloaded from MTA's website or by clicking on the *Download* option on the application website. Following their completion, these documents shall be signed and uploaded in PDF format to *Attachments* on the application website. It is sufficient to submit the declarations in Hungarian. Applicants whose first language is other than Hungarian shall submit the declarations in English.)

1. Host institution declaration – *the declaration is to be uploaded to the website bearing an original signature*. In case of applications to MTA's research network, the completed declaration of the acceptance of the research project is to be signed by the head of the host institution (director-general of the research centre, director of the independent research institute) and uploaded, in the case of applications to a university, the completed declaration is to be signed by the manager or managers authorized by the internal regulations of the respective university.
2. Research plan and detailed work plan in annual breakdown in approximately 15,000 characters (including spaces, notes and bibliography as well) – *to be uploaded to the website bearing the applicant's signature*;
3. Budget plan in annual breakdown including the justification for expenses – *signed copy to be uploaded to the website*;
4. Professional CV of the applicant;
5. List of publications and citations numbered and in categorical breakdown, provided that the applicant has not uploaded their data into the MTMT database (mainly in the case of foreign researchers or those who have worked abroad so far; researchers from Hungary are advised to use the MTMT database);
6. Scanned copy of the applicant's scientific degree (PhD and DLA) or the document attesting the decision of the University Doctoral Council on the award of the doctorate;
7. Applicant's declaration – *to be uploaded to the website bearing an original signature*;
8. Applicants who have had any former postdoctoral employment shall upload the document proving this fact to "*Other documents*" under *Attachments* and record this fact in the subject field of "*Other data in connection with the application*" under "*Data of the application*".
9. Further information considered necessary for the application (optional part of the application; upload e.g. the copy of children's birth certificates to qualify for the age limit extension, the copy of documents proving maternity leave, the copy of documents proving single parenting – sufficient in the original language, no translation required).

Formal check of the application

The grantor shall send a confirmation of admission of the application via email within 7 days from submission or shall reject the application without evaluating it.

Before admission the following criteria are to be examined (formal check):

- the applicant is personally eligible to apply;

- the amount of the requested funding does not exceed the maximum grant amount, and the funding rate is within the range specified in the call;
- the documents requested in the call meet the content requirements set in the call, were signed and submitted by the given deadline;
- there is no reason for exclusion of the applicant.

Should the application prove to be incorrect or incomplete, the Department of Grant Management shall call on the applicant to remedy the deficiencies via his/her submitted e-mail address. Such remedy of deficiencies may be allowed only once, and the applicant must provide the correct or complete version within 5 working days after receipt of the notification to this effect. Should the applicant provide a rectification which contains an error or which is incomplete, or should the applicant fail to correct any irregularities within the specified time limit, the application may be rejected without further examination of its content.

Applications shall be rejected without further examination of their content if the applications were submitted after the application deadline set in the call, or in case the applicant is not eligible to apply or if there is any other reason for exclusion of the applicant.

The grantor shall give reasons for the rejection.

Means and deadline of the submission of the application

Applications are to be submitted in Hungarian and in English regardless of the research field. Where a legal dispute arises, the Hungarian application shall be considered as legally authoritative. Applications are allowed to be submitted in English only if the postdoctoral applicant is not a Hungarian national and his or her first language is other than Hungarian. In such cases the English application shall serve as the legally binding document.

Applications are to be submitted electronically. The host institution's declaration and the applicant's declaration bearing original signatures are also to be posted or delivered (in one copy) to the Department of Grant Management of the Secretariat of MTA.

Detailed information on electronic submission is available in Guide 2.

Applications are to be submitted by **16:00 CET 11th April 2019 (Thursday)** in electronic form via the online application website https://palyazat.mta.hu/premium_2019 Following the submission of the application on the application website, the hard copies of the above mentioned documents are to be posted to the Department of Grant Management of the Secretariat of MTA (MTA Titkárság, Kutatási Pályázatok Főosztálya, Nádor u. 7., H-1051 Budapest) on the day of the deadline of the submission the latest. Applicants are required to put on the envelope “*Prémium posztdoktori pályázat 2019*” (“Application for Premium Postdoctoral Program 2019”). Submission of the application is free of charge. For further information regarding the full application procedure applicants are requested to contact the staff of the Department of Grant Management of the Secretariat of MTA at the e-mail address premium@titkarsag.mta.hu or at the phone numbers below:

- +36 1 411 6336 (social sciences and humanities)
- +36 1 411 6100/550 (life sciences)
- +36 1 411 6287 (mathematics and natural sciences).

Terms and conditions of support

The fellowship awarded is non-repayable. There is no need to involve own resources, the funding rate is 10-100 per cent. The funding is provided by the Secretariat of MTA on a yearly basis pursuant to a grant award document which the Secretariat will have issued to the host research institution or to MTA TKI.

Following a successful application, the Secretariat of MTA issues the grant award document to the MTA research centre or research institute where the host institution is an MTA research centre or an MTA research institute. Where the host institution is a higher education institution or a public collection or a public institution, the Secretariat of MTA issues the grant award document to MTA TKI. In the former case, the amount of support granted is provided via the MTA research centre or MTA research institute. In the latter case the amount of support granted is provided via MTA TKI.

Regarding the actual transfer of the grant amount provided by the budget for 2019, the Secretariat of MTA issues the grant award document for a period of three months. Grant amounts for the following years are subject to the availability of budgetary funding.

The beginning of the support period under this fellowship scheme may be postponed by a maximum of 2 months, in which case the head of the host institution is to be informed about such postponement in written form not later than 31st July 2019. Any type of suspension is subject to the approval of MTA's President. Failure to submit a request for approval regarding the planned suspension of the fellowship by the given deadline will result in the termination of the fellowship.

No support shall be awarded to the applicants if

- they have provided false, forged or misleading data or have made such statements which have substantially affected the outcome of the decision on the award;
- declarations defined by the present call for applications and the relevant state budgetary regulations as a precondition of the issuing of the grant award document have not been made, mandatory documents have not been submitted, or declarations have been withdrawn during the process.

Evaluation of the applications

The professional evaluation of the applications will be conducted along the following key aspects:

- previous scientific achievements (with regard to the age of the applicant), number of citations, structure of publication activity, number of publications;
- importance, novelty, international significance of the topic;
- scientific significance of the expected results;
- suitability of the host institution
- viability and justification of the budget plan;
- risk factors of the research work, including ethical risk.

The evaluation of the applications proceeds in two stages. In stage one, formally valid applications are reviewed anonymously by two Hungarian and/or foreign experts specializing in the given field. Reviewers must make it clear whether or not they recommend the application for funding. Should the two evaluations contradict each other, a third specialist will be involved. Results of the evaluation will be summed up by the Department of Grant Management.

In stage two of the evaluation process a jury invited by the President of MTA shall review the applications taking into account the anonymous evaluations and shall set up the ranking of the applications in three main scientific sections, and based on all the above the jury shall make a proposal on the ranking and grant amounts of the applications selected for funding. Based on the ranking the final selection decision shall be made by the President of MTA. The jury shall rank 30 per cent more applications than the number of applications that can be supported from the available funding. Total funding for all the applications selected for funding by the jury cannot exceed the announced budget of the call.

Deadline of evaluation, announcement of results

The final decision shall be made by the President of MTA within 90 calendar days following the deadline of submission. The call results shall be notified to the applicants via e-mail by the end of June 2019. The list of successful applicants, the titles of their applications and the names of the host institutions will be published on MTA's website (<http://www.mta.hu>).

Legal remedy

No legal remedy may be sought concerning the substance of the decision on the results of the call.

Information on how to lodge a complaint

Applicants may lodge a complaint addressed to the President of MTA, should they believe that a procedural element of the call procedure or of the decision-making concerning the award of the grant, or of the issue of the grant award document or of the transfer of the state-funded grant amount or of the recovery of undue payments has violated in any way a legislative provision or has been contrary to what has been provided for in this call for applications. No complaint can be lodged concerning the scientific evaluation of the applications. The complaint has to contain the name and address of the applicant lodging the complaint, the specification of the contested measure or of the instance of inaction, the description of the relevant facts, the identification of the specific legislative provision or provision of this call which has been allegedly violated by the contested measure or instance of inaction, and the signature of the applicant lodging the complaint.

The complaint may be submitted only once within 15 days following the receipt of the notification about the decision containing the contested measure or an instance of inaction via e-mail to the e-mail address premium@titkarsag.mta.hu and at the same time by post using the postal address of the Department of Grant Management of the Secretariat of MTA: MTA Titkarság Kutatási Pályázatok Főosztálya, Nádor u. 7., H-1051 Budapest. Processing of the complaint shall be completed within 30 days following its receipt, whereby examination and revision may only cover matters which are being specifically contested in the complaint. Incomplete complaints, or complaints lodged after the above-mentioned deadline or complaints concerning the scientific evaluation shall be rejected without further examination.

Further information

The grantor hereby informs the applicants of the following:

- a) The Hungarian State Treasury operates a monitoring system regarding budgetary funding and is involved in the coordination of the use of budgetary support funds. A support decision not registered in the monitoring system may not serve as a basis for valid funding.
- b) By providing data for the monitoring system, the grantor ensures that in case of funding through a grant process, the data of the call for applications are published on the relevant website, and so are all data related to facts occurring or conditions determined by the grantor in connection with the use of the grant amount, as well as facts and conditions concerning the legal relationship between grantor and grantee, the provision of the grant amount, and any reporting requirement. The data registered in the monitoring system may be deleted after 5 years from the last calendar day of the year in which the decision of support was made.
- c) The legal provisions on the right to informational self-determination set out what shall be considered as data of public interest. The data which would not qualify as such in the first place but are being processed by an individual or a body

- who/which is in charge of the preparation of the call for applications,
- who/which is in charge of the announcement of the call for applications,
- who/which is in charge of the preparation of the decision on the award of the grant,
- who/which is in charge of the decision-making, and which are related to the call for applications or to the application process or to the decision on the award of the grant, shall be considered data which are public on grounds of public interest, provided that they are not to be considered sensitive or special personal data.

- d) The grantor shall check the use of the grant in line with the terms of the grant award document, pursuant to the provisions of the Government Decree 368/2011 (XII. 31.) on the implementation of the Act on Public Finances.

The aim of and legal basis for the processing of personal data during the call procedure

- a) The personal data given by the applicant shall be processed for the purposes of the conduct of the call procedure by the Department of Grant Management at the Secretariat of MTA within the Consolidated Grant Management Framework of MTA. These personal data will be accessible to the competent organizational units of the Secretariat of MTA based on the MTA's statutes and rules of procedures, as well as to reviewers participating in the evaluation process of the applications, in so much as it is needed for the performance of their duties defined by law. The personal data of the grantees will be processed by the host institution concerned (in the case of researchers based at a university, or a public collection or a public institution, the data will be processed by MTA TKI) in order to conclude the contract of employment.
- b) The legal basis for the processing of personal data is the duty to perform public service tasks as specified in the Academy Law.
- c) Any changes in the personal data of the applicant should be communicated at the following e-mail address: premium@titkarsag.mta.hu
- d) The guideline on MTA's data processing policy is available at http://mta.hu/data/dokumentumok/kozerdeku_adatok/2018/Adatkezelesi%20tajekoztato20180525.pdf

Budapest, 28th February 2019

László Lovász
President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences