

**MTA DISTINGUISHED GUEST SCIENTIST
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME 2024**

**The Hungarian Academy of Sciences launches a call for applications
for the invitation of internationally acclaimed foreign researchers
to conduct research in Hungary for a period of 3-6 months**

Objectives

With a view to fostering the global competitiveness of research groups operating in Hungary, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, hereinafter referred to as “MTA”) launches a call for applications for the invitation of internationally acclaimed foreign researchers – Distinguished Guest Scientists (hereinafter referred to as “Guest Scientists”) to conduct joint research for a period of 3-6 months in any field of science as member of a research group which is based either at a research institution belonging to the Hungarian Research Network (Magyar Kutatási Hálózat, hereinafter referred to as “HUN-REN”) or at a Hungarian institution of higher education or even at a Hungarian public collection or public institution engaged in scientific research in line with its statutes. From the funds available under the appropriation provided for in Chapter XXXIII “Hungarian Academy of Sciences”, Title 6 “Chapter-managed appropriations”, Subtitle 6.3 “Support for Professional Duties” of the Act LV of 2023 on the Central Budget of Hungary for the Year 2024 (the Central Budget Act), a total amount of HUF 100 million may be earmarked for the funding of the Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme, to.

The Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme is not meant to fund visits to research units, or participation in conferences or delivering lecture series in Hungary.

The Guest Scientists invited on the basis of the successful applications shall take part in the work of the given research group in the context of an employment relationship (either public employment or work contract) or an assignment contract.

Eligibility and conditions of participation

1. Application may be submitted by a Principal Investigator (hereinafter referred to as “Host PI”) leading a research group which is based either at a research institution belonging to the HUN-REN or at a Hungarian institution of higher education or at a Hungarian public collection or public institution engaged in scientific research in line with its statutes (hereinafter altogether referred to as “research entity”). The application to be submitted by the Host PI shall have been prepared in cooperation with the Guest Scientist who is to be invited and shall have been approved by the head of the host research entity.
2. The research to be conducted in Hungary under the Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme is to last from 3 up to 6 months and is to be completed by 31st December 2024 at the latest.
3. The Host PI in cooperation with the host research entity will provide appropriate research facilities for the Guest Scientist.
4. The host research entity undertakes to provide logistics and administrative support for the Guest Scientist concerning his/her entry to and stay in Hungary (including assistance with travel and accommodation arrangements) if required. Further on the research entity undertakes to employ the Guest Scientist in public employment or with a work contract or with an assignment contract.

5. The Guest Scientist undertakes to spend the working time determined in the framework of their employment relationship (see above in section 4) under the Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship entirely on the implementation of the joint research project during their stay in Hungary. Any lecture given by the Guest Scientist will either be delivered at the host research entity or be organized by it and shall be subject to the consent of the Host PI, and shall be without any remuneration.
6. Only one application can be submitted by the Host PI in this application period.

The amount and form of funding to be requested

An individual grant for a Guest Scientist may reach the maximum amount of HUF 2.5million per month. This is a gross amount, which is to cover all costs of the Guest Scientist (personnel costs including social security contributions, and operational expenses). No additional costs will be accepted as eligible.

The funding is non-repayable. The intensity of the funding is 100 per cent. The availability of own resources is not required by the grantor.

Application procedure, step-by-step

1. Contact is established between the Host PI and the Guest Scientist candidate.
2. They draw up a joint plan for research to be conducted in Hungary for a period of minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 months.
3. The Guest Scientist candidate sends the completed Application Form containing his/her signature to the Host PI (electronic version is acceptable).
4. The head of the host research entity approves of (signs) the Application Form which has been already signed by the Guest Scientist candidate and the Host PI. The Host Institution Declaration is signed by the head of the host research entity and its chief financial officer.
5. The application package is submitted via the electronic submission portal.

Submission of applications, requirements regarding form and content

Applications are to be submitted via the electronic submission portal of the Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme (https://palyazat.mta.hu/vendegkutato_2024) by

16:00 CET, 27th October 2023.

The original, signed Application Form and the original Host Institution Declaration shall also be submitted by post* in one copy each to the Department of Grant Management of the Secretariat of MTA (hereinafter referred to as “Department of Grant Management”) (name and address: MTA Titkársága, Kutatási Pályázatok Főosztálya, Nádor u. 7., H-1051 Budapest), with postage stamp dated as the submission date of the electronic application at the latest. The reference “Vendégkutatói Program 2024” (“Application for Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme 2024”) shall be put on the envelope containing the documents. No application fee shall be charged.

* If the applicant has signed the electronically submitted application form and the declaration of acceptance using an authentication service (AVDH or other qualified personal electronic signature - in the case of persons acting on behalf of an institution or research organisation only an advanced or qualified electronic signatures may be accepted) as defined by the Government Decree, it is not necessary to send a signed paper copy of the application form and the declaration of acceptance by post.

Applicants (prospective Host PI's) can enter the submission portal of the Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme using their own username and password valid for MTA Akadémiai Adattár (the Academy's Database, hereinafter referred to as "AAT"). The submission portal automatically retrieves the prospective host PI's data stored in the AAT, so 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.

If the applicant (prospective Host PI) has not registered in the AAT yet, registration can be done using *Guide 1*. If the applicant has already got an AAT username and password (or after registration has been successfully completed), the applicant should follow the instructions in the Guide from point 3 onwards, so as to fill in the obligatory data in the AAT.

On the submission portal of the Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme, *Guide 2* should be consulted for completing and submitting the application.

The Secretariat of MTA shall perform the administrative duties related to the management of the fellowship programme pursuant to § 19 (1) of Act XL of 1994 on the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (hereinafter referred to as the "Academy Act").

The application package must include:

Data to be entered in the online Application Form on the submission portal:

- personal data of the Host PI (name, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, nationality, gender, contact details, name of current employer, scientific degree, MTMT registration number, Internet link where the bibliographic data and citations of the Host PI's scientific works are available);
- personal data of the Guest Scientist (name, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, nationality, gender, contact details, name of current employer, Internet link where the bibliographic data and citations of the Guest Scientist's scientific works are available);
- application data (title of the proposal, field of science covered, short description of the research project, short summary for the media (not longer than 10 sentences), name of the host research entity and that of the host research group).

Documents to be uploaded to the submission portal (in PDF format):

- *Application Form* (Attachment 1) which should be completed in full and has to be signed by the Host PI, the Guest Scientist candidate and the head of the host research entity;
- *Curriculum Vitae* of the Host PI and of the Guest Scientist candidate;
- *accompanying letter* in Hungarian and in English pointing out the significance of the joint research work and the expected impact of the Guest Scientist's activity in Hungary in maximum of 1 page each and signed by the Host PI;
- *Host Institution Declaration* (Attachment 2) signed by the head and by the chief financial officer of the host research entity;
- *other documents* (if available, e.g. ethical authorization).

(The templates to be filled in – the template of the Application Form and that of the Host Institution Declaration – can be downloaded from the call for applications published at the MTA website or from the *Download* item in the menu of the submission portal. Once completed and signed, these documents need to be uploaded to the *Attachments* item of the menu. The Host Institution Declaration needs to be uploaded in Hungarian only.)

For further information regarding the full application procedure, applicants are requested to contact the staff of the Department of Grant Management at the e-mail address meghivas@titkarsag.mta.hu or by phone at +36 1 411 6177.

Checking formal requirements

The applications submitted will be checked by the Department of Grant Management. The application only meets the formal requirements if all the documents were submitted and posted with the required content and signature and until the time limit set in the call, and both the applicant and the host research entity is eligible to the terms of application set in the call. In the event that an application which has been submitted contains incorrect or incomplete information, the Department of Grant Management shall call on the applicant to remedy the deficiencies identified. Such remedy of deficiencies may be allowed once, and the applicant must provide the correct or complete version within five working days after receipt of the notification to this effect.

The Department of Grant Management will, by the 7th working day after submission at the latest, inform the applicant at the e-mail address the applicant has provided, either of the fact that the application has been admitted for evaluation or that the application has been rejected without evaluation.

The application shall be rejected without evaluation if (1) the applicant is personally ineligible to apply; (2) the documents required in the call have been received after the time limit; (3) the applicant has provided information which is either false, forged or misleading, and which could have substantially affected the outcome of the decision upon evaluation. When informing the applicant of the rejection without evaluation, the grantor shall provide reasons for this.

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 will be considered invalid and will not be examined any further, and the applicant shall be notified thereof by the Department of Grant Management of. There is no substantive legal remedy against rejection.

Evaluation process, decision on funding

Applications shall be evaluated and ranked by an *ad hoc* evaluation committee. The members of this committee will be invited by the Secretary-General of MTA based on the fields of science covered by the applications and the host research entities involved, with due regard to any potential instances of conflict of interest. The committee shall evaluate the applications based on the submitted research plan, the scientific achievements of the Guest Scientist and the significance of the results that the joint research work may yield. During the evaluation of the applications, preference will be given to research groups which support young scientists by involving undergraduates, PhD students and postdocs in their research projects. The committee shall group the applications into three categories (highly recommended for funding, recommended for funding, not recommended for funding) and shall set up a ranking within each category. The total sum of the grants provided for applications which are judged to be highly recommended for funding shall not exceed the total budget of this Fellowship Programme as announced in the call for applications. Based on the ranking, the final decision shall be made by the Secretary-General of MTA by 8th January 2024 at the latest.

Notification of call results

The Department of Grant Management shall notify the heads of the host research entities and the Host PI's of the final decision by 15th January 2024, shall send an invitation letter to the Guest Scientists selected (at the same time sending a copy of the latter to the head of the host research entity concerned). MTA shall publish on its website the names of the Guest Scientists selected for invitation and those of the Host PI's, as well as the names of the host research entities.

Issuing of the grant award document, payment of the grant

Once the application has been selected for funding, the Secretariat of MTA representing MTA (as grantor) shall provide the host research entity with the amount of the grant awarded. The grant is non-repayable, and it may be transferred pursuant to the grant award document.

The grant shall not be provided if the travel of Guest Scientist is deleted. In case the research period is shorter than the period applied for the grant provided will be decreased too.

According to the terms of the grant award document the Host Research entity has to submit a financial report to the Directorate of Finance of the MTA Secretariat. The grant amount may be used to cover personnel costs and operating expenses (such as the remuneration/salary for the Guest Scientist and the ensuing social security contributions, travel expenses, accommodation expenses, other operating expenses directly connected to the research on question). No cost of any other type may be covered by the grant.

Any amount which has been unused or unduly used, or illegally used or used for purposes other than it was meant for shall be repaid increased by late payment interest, in accordance with the relevant specific legislative provisions. The grantor shall send the grantee a formal demand for payment stipulating the repayment obligation. Unless otherwise provided for by law, the grantee shall fulfil its repayment obligation within 30 days from receipt of the formal demand for payment.

The detailed rules on financial reporting shall be laid down by the grantor at the start of the grant period.

The Guest Scientist and the Host PI must submit a joint research report until the exact time limit set in the grant award document. This report shall have an annex containing the manuscript(s) of the scientific paper(s) the Guest Scientist and the Host PI will have prepared together and the title(s) of the scientific journal(s) in which they intend to publish it/them. (The annex should contain the manuscript of at least one scientific paper meant to be published in one of the top periodicals of the respective scientific field.) The research report has to state the exact starting and end dates of the Guest Scientist's stay in Hungary. The research report has to be supplemented with an abstract for communication purposes written in Hungarian and in English, of a length of two pages each, summarizing in an easily understandable way, with illustrations where relevant, the main ideas behind the joint research work undertaken in the course of the fellowship and the research output. The research report - in comparison to the expected results stated in the application - will be reviewed by the coordinators of the Department of Grant Management after submission and then forwarded to the Secretary of MTA for approval within 60 days.

In case the Host PI would not submit the joint research report by the deadline or the report would not be approved the grant is due to be paid back. The terms of payback are set in the grant award document.

In the joint scientific publications, reference has to be made to the MTA Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme 2024 and to the host research entity, and these papers have to be forwarded to the meghivas@titkarsag.mta.hu e-mail address, too.

The Guest Scientist and the Host PI undertake that they will upload the digital data of the publications (including lectures) whose creation/publishing will have been funded under the MTA Distinguished Guest Scientist Fellowship Programme to the Hungarian Scientific Bibliography (Magyar Tudományos Művek Tára, "MTMI") system operated by the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA Könyvtár és Információs Központ, "KIK"), and in PDF/A format to the repository of MTA KIK REAL or to the repository indicated by the relevant decision of MTA's president within 30 days from the date of publishing.

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 shall 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 was allegedly violated by the contested measure or by the 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 implying an instance of inaction, via e-mail to the address meghivas@titkarsag.mta.hu and at the same time by post, using the postal address of the Department of Grant Management: MTA Titkarsága, Kutatási Pályázatok Főosztálya (Nádor u. 7., H-1051 Budapest). The complaint shall be processed within 30 days following its receipt, the scope of the review being limited exclusively to what has been 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.

Additional information

MTA hereby informs 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, MTA shall ensure that in the case of funding through a grant process, the data of the call for applications are published on the relevant website, as are all data related to facts occurring or conditions determined by MTA in connection with the use of the grant amount, as well as data related to 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) MTA shall check the use of the grant in line with the terms of the grant award document, pursuant to the provisions of 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 (“Egységes Pályázati Keretrendszer”, “EPK”) of MTA.

These personal data will be accessible to the competent organisational units of the Secretariat of MTA based on 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 successful applicants will be processed by the host research entity concerned in order to conclude the contract of employment as well as by the Secretariat of MTA in order to issue the grant award document and to process the financial reports related to the grant.

- b) The legal basis for the processing of personal data is the duty to perform public service tasks as specified in the Academy Act and in Act LXXVI of 2014 on Scientific Research, Development and Innovation.
- c) Any changes in the personal data of the applicant should be communicated at the following e-mail address: meghivas@titkarsag.mta.hu.
- d) The guideline on MTA’s data processing policy is available on MTA’s website mta.hu, under “Hasznos információk” (Useful information), by selecting “Adatkezelési tájékoztató” (Data Processing Policy).

Budapest,th September 2023

László KOLLÁR
Secretary-General of MTA