



Contracting Authority: European Commission

**Science & Technology Fellowship Programme in China
(STF CHINA)**

**Guidelines
for applicants for Science & Technology Fellowship
in China**

Reference: EuropeAid/127024/L/ACT/CN

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Deadlines for submission of proposals:

20th June 2008 and 5th September 2008

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1. THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME IN CHINA

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Science & Technology Fellowship Programme in China (STF China) is the pilot phase of an EC action in China aiming at building bridges between the EU and China in the Science & Technology domain. STF China will promote mobility of EU researchers towards the Chinese research and development area. This will enable EU researchers knowledgeable about the Chinese language and research culture to successfully develop meaningful and long-lasting contacts with their Chinese counterparts.

STF China has two intakes of 15 EU researchers each in Chinese host institutions. Each intake is planned for 24 months, including a two-day pre-departure briefing in Brussels and a six-month tailor-made Chinese language and research culture training in Beijing followed by an 18-month practical research period in a Chinese host organisation. The Programme will be implemented through centralised direct management with overall management responsibility of the EC Delegation to China and Mongolia.

These first two intakes constitute a Preparatory Action which will allow the European Commission to prepare proposals with a view to the adoption of future actions of this kind.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

The overall objective of STF is for the European Union to become an increasingly credible partner in China's fast-growing research environment.

The purpose of the programme is to promote the mobility of European researchers towards the Chinese research and development area.

The programme is expected to achieve the following results having implemented the following activities:

(1) Participation of outgoing European researchers in Chinese research and development programmes facilitated

- 1.1 Selection, through a call for proposals, of outstanding STF participants
- 1.2 Pre-departure briefing in Brussels before the departure of the STF fellows to China
- 1.3 Six-month tailor-made Chinese language and research culture training in Beijing
- 1.4 Living support to STF participants

(2) Sustainable links and research partnerships between EU and Chinese research institutions and between individual researchers established

- 2.1 18-month practical research period in a Chinese host organisation
- 2.2 Networking and events for STF fellows including support the formation and functioning of an STF fellow alumni organisation
- 2.3 Support to practical research

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is EUR 1,695,000. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to award all available funds.

The fellowship estimates:

- Flat rate monthly living allowance ca. 1800 EUR
- Single flat rate installation allowance ca. 1800 EUR
- Reimbursement of two international travels estimated 2 x 1500 EUR
- Reimbursement of participation in one international conference estimated 2500 EUR

The Contracting Authority does not undertake to finance the following items, but expects that either *the Fellow*, the sending or host organization will cover them:

- Costs for visa
- Health and accident insurance
- Costs for participation in the call for proposals including selection interview
- Costs for purchasing of consumables and materials necessary for the research project
- Costs for domestic travel for research purposes
- Other reasonable costs related to the participant's research activity on the programme
- Exemption from tuition fees during practical research period
- Use of laboratory and research facilities free of charge
- Free access to research related data sources, research materials etc.

1.4 TIMING

The first intake of Fellows is foreseen for December 2008, the second intake for April 2009.

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of actions financed under this call, based on the provisions of the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions, and adapted to the specific nature of this call (preparatory action).

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants: who may apply ?

For clarity please note that:

“Applicant” refers to the individual person who submits the application.

“Fellow” refers to the applicant with whom the Fellowship contract will be signed.

“Action” refers to the 6 months language training and 18 months research activity in China, carried out by the Fellow.

“Fellowship” refers to the financial contribution of the EC to the action.

Applicants to the fellowship programme are expected to fulfil the following eligibility criteria:

They must:

- Be nationals of an EU Member State, and
- Have either a post-graduate university degree (M.A., MSc or equivalent) and minimum two years of practical research experience or hold a doctoral degree, and
- Have prepared a research project that he/she intends to carry out in China during the practical research period, and
- Be supported by a sending EU organisation (see **European Sending Organisation** below), and
- Have identified a Chinese host institution for their practical research (see **Chinese Host Organisation** below)

They should:

- Ideally be not older than 32 years at the deadline for submission of the application
- Have no or only limited Chinese language skills

European Sending Organisation

All STF China candidates must provide satisfactory documentary evidence of having a sending organisation. The sending organisation agrees to support the participant whilst being in China. In the context of the STF China selection process, the sending organisation shall produce a written undertaking for the participant confirming their support as sending organisation.

A European Sending Organisation may be any EU public or private scientific or research & development institution that fulfils one or more of the following requirements:

- Has either already established or can convincingly demonstrate an interest in establishing scientific co-operation with China;
- Has a joint laboratory or research agreement with an institution in China;
- Has implemented or is currently implementing a research project with China financed e.g. under any National Programmes, the EU Framework Programme for research, the Asia Link Programme or any other relevant European funded instrument.

Chinese Host Organisation

At the moment of applying for the STF call for proposals, the applicant shall propose a host institution in China in which to carry out the practical research. The applicant's proposed hosting institution in China shall be

- Any Chinese National Research Laboratory

Or

- University laboratories / research institutes attached to a national or public or private university

At the time of submitting his/her application, the applicant must have had preliminary contacts with the proposed Chinese host organization and prove the readiness of the organisation to host the applicant, in the form of an invitation letter.

Once the fellowship agreement is signed between the European Commission and the applicant, he/she will need to enter into a written agreement with the host organisation, specifying all practical details convened between them. The content of the agreement shall be negotiated between the Chinese host organisation and the participant or his/her sending institution before the participant starts on the programme.

This agreement shall contain the following:

- establish the status of the participant as guest researcher;
- clarify the intellectual property rights which may arise in connection with the research results;
- specify if and how the host organisation is granting specific support to the STF fellow, this may for instance include exemption from tuition fees during practical research period, use

of laboratory and research facilities free of charge, free access to research related data sources, research materials and consumables, etc;

- strike the right balance to allow the participant on the one hand to be integrated in the Chinese team whilst simultaneously granting him enough flexibility to pursue his research project in co-operation with the Chinese hosting team.

Number of proposals and fellowships per applicant

An applicant may not submit more than one proposal under this call for proposals.

An applicant may not be awarded more than one fellowship under this call for proposals.

2.1.2 Partnerships and eligibility of partners

Not applicable under this Call for Proposals

2.1.3 Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made

The only eligible action under this call is the realisation of a research project. The Fellowship Programme is in principle open to all disciplines. Ideally, the applicant's research proposal should concentrate on fields of research where the European Union and China carry out or are potentially interested in co-operative scientific research work. The subject of the research project should further the participant's competence in a certain area and be of strong interest for the EU sending and Chinese host institution alike.

2.1.4 Eligibility of costs: costs which may be taken into consideration for the grant

Not applicable under this Call for Proposals

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.2.1 Application form

Applications must be submitted using the application form annexed to these Guidelines (Annex A). Applicants should keep strictly to the format of the application and fill in the paragraphs and the pages in order. Please complete the application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

The Fellowship Application Form consists of two parts, labelled:

- Part 1 : administrative information [MS Excel sheet]
- Part 2: complementary information and description of the research project [MS Word Format]

Applicants must apply in English.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Both Part 1 and Part 2 of the Application Form, as published under this call, must be duly

completed and submitted. Incomplete application may not be considered for further selection.

Supporting documents

Applications must be accompanied by the following supporting documents:

For the applicant:

- Proof of nationality and age (copy of passport or valid identity document);
- Two recommendation letters, one of which possibly by the applicant's PhD supervisor if applicable;
- Copy of the applicant's PhD Diploma, if applicable, or the most recent diploma;
- Copy of the applicant's most recent publications

For the European sending organisation

- Letter from the applicant's sending organisation confirming support to the applicant whilst he or she is in China. In this letter, the sending organisation could specify its moral endorsement of leave of absence from the candidate's regular job (in case he/she is an employee of the organisation) or material support in any kind for the candidate;
- Evidence of the sending institution's previous/existing co-operation with China (co-operation agreements with a Chinese partner institution or the establishment of joint laboratory etc).

For the Chinese host organization

- Invitation letter from the Chinese host organisation expressing the willingness on the side of the host to allow involvement of the applicant in the research of the institution whilst pursuing his/her research project proposed in the Application Form in co-operation with the Chinese hosting team.
- Evidence of the Chinese hosting organization's previous/existing co-operation with European research institutions (has implemented or is currently implementing a EU financed research project e.g. under a National Programme, the EU Framework Programme for research, the Asia Link Programme or any other relevant European funded instrument)

2.2.2 *Where and how to send the Applications*

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the addresses below:

Postal address :

Cristina QUEROL CARCELLER
Head of Finance, Contracts and Audit Section
European Union
Delegation of the European Commission to China and Mongolia
No. 15 Dongzhimenwai Street, Sanlitun, Chaoyang District
100600 Beijing
People's Republic of China

Address for hand delivery / delivery by private courier service: :

Cristina QUEROL CARCELLER
Head of Finance, Contracts and Audit Section
European Union
Delegation of the European Commission to China and Mongolia
4th floor, Qian Kun Mansion, 6, Sanlitun Xi Liu Jie
100027 Beijing
People's Republic of China

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected.

Applications must be submitted in one original and four copies in A4 size, each bound. The full application form must also be supplied in electronic format. The electronic format must contain **exactly the same** proposal as the paper version and be sent together with the latter in the same envelope.

The outer envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the full name and address of the applicant, and the words "Not to be opened before the opening session" and "□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□".

Applicants must verify that their application is complete using the checklist included in the application form.

2.2.3 *Deadline for submission of Applications*

There will be two deadlines in the year 2008 for the submission of applications: **20th June 2008** and **5th September 2008** at 16h00 Beijing time.

Any application submitted after the first deadline will automatically be included in the next batch of applications.

Any application submitted after the **last** deadline will be automatically rejected.

2.2.4 *Further information for the Application*

Questions may be sent by e-mail or by fax no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: DELEGATION-CHINA-CALL-TENDER@ec.europa.eu.

Fax: 0086-10-8454-8011

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals.

In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the Contracting Authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with the answers, will be published on the internet at the EuropeAid website: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/index_en.htm and at <http://www.ec.europa.eu>

2.3 **EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS**

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the Contracting Authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All actions submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

STEP 1: OPENING SESSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK

The following will be assessed:

- The deadline has been respected. If the first deadline has not been respected the proposal will automatically be included in the next batch of applications. Any application submitted after the **last** deadline will automatically be rejected.
- The Application Form is complete according to the Checklist of part 2 of the application form. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the proposal may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the proposal may not be evaluated further.

Following the opening session and the administrative check, the Contracting Authority will send a letter to all applicants, indicating whether their application was submitted prior to the deadline, informing them of the reference number they have been allocated, whether they have satisfied all the criteria mentioned in the checklist and whether Application Form has been recommended for evaluation.

STEP 2: EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION

The Commission, assisted by a number of independent experts, will undertake an evaluation of the dossier and establish a short-list of approximately 30 candidates per intake. The evaluation criteria to be applied to STF China, together with an indication of their relative weight, are set out below in the Evaluation Grid.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Score scale
1. The Applicant	0-40
1.1 Does the applicant have sufficient research experience?	10
1.2 Does the applicant have a sound academic record (Number of peer-reviewed research articles)?	10
1.3 Is participation in STF likely to further the applicant's competence in his /her specific research field?	10
1.4 Does the applicant have sufficient support from his/her European sending organization?	5
1.5 Has the applicant secured a Chinese host organization, who is willing and ready to enter into written agreement with the participant to that effect?	5
2. The Research Proposal	0-40
2.1 What is the scientific and technological quality of the research proposed? Is it feasible?	10
2.2 Is the choice of research method and methodology proposed appropriate?	10
2.3 Does the research proposal fall into fields of research where the European Union and China carry out or are potentially interested in carrying out co-operative scientific research work?	10
2.4 How relevant is the proposal to the interest objective and interest of his/her hosting institution?	5
2.5 How relevant is the proposal to the objective and interest of his/her	5

sending institution?	
3. The Chinese hosting institution	0-20
3.1 What is the level of research quality of the Chinese host institution?	10
3.2 What level of contact does the Chinese hosting institution have with Europe (Has implemented or is currently implementing a EU financed research project e.g. under any National Programmes, the EU Framework Programme for research, the Asia Link Programme or any other relevant European funded instrument)	10
Maximum total score	100

STEP 3: INTERVIEW

The short-listed candidates will be invited for an interview in Brussels with a jury panel. The estimated dates for the interviews are as follows:

1st intake: middle of July 2008;

2nd intake: middle of October 2008.

The short-listed candidates will be invited for the interviews approximately one week before.

The Commission will be assisted by independent experts, assessing the candidates' motivation, his or her suitability for the programme from a European point of view, as well as the scientific quality and feasibility of the research proposal and the personal and communication skills.

The Commission attaches great importance in meeting the candidates personally, therefore telephone interviews will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

2.4 SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED PROPOSALS

Not applicable under this Call for Proposals

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

2.5.1 Content of the decision

Applicants will be informed in writing of the Contracting Authority's decision concerning their application and the reasons for the decision.

Applicants believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may petition to the Contracting Authority directly. The Contracting Authority must reply within 90 days of receipt of the complaint.

The applicant may have recourse to procedures established under Community legislation. European citizens or residents, including legal entities with a registered office in the European Union, also have the right to complain to the European Ombudsman, who investigates complaints of maladministration by the European Community Institutions.

2.5.2 Indicative time table

	DATE	TIME*
Information meeting (if any)	Not applicable	Not applicable
Deadline for request for any clarifications from the Contracting Authority for the 1st / 2nd intake	1 st intake: 30.05.2008 2 nd intake: 15.08.2008	16h00 Beijing Time
Last date on which clarifications are issued by the Contracting Authority	1 st intake: 9.06.2008 2 nd intake: 26.08.2008	-
Deadline for submission of Application Form	1 st intake: 20.06.2008 2 nd intake: 05.09.2008	16h00 Beijing Time
Information to applicants on the opening & administrative check for the 1st / 2nd intake	1 st intake: 30.06.2008* 2 nd intake: 15.09.2008*	-
Invitation to interviews	1 st intake: 8.07.2008* 2 nd intake: 23.9.2008*	
Interview of the short-listed candidates	1 st intake: middle of July 2008 2 nd intake: middle of October 2008	
Notification of award for the 1st / 2nd intake	1 st intake: 04.08.2008* 2 nd intake: 06.11.2008*	-
Contract signature for the first/second intake	1 st intake: 11.09.2008* 2 nd intake: 04.12.2008*	
Start of the 6 months language training in Beijing	1 st intake: December 2008 * 2 nd intake: April 2009 *	-

***Provisional dates.** All times are in the time zone of the country of the Contracting Authority, i.e. Beijing time

2.6 CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION FOLLOWING THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A FELLOWSHIP

Following the decision to award a fellowship, the Beneficiary will be offered a contract based on the Contracting Authority's template (see Annex B). By signing the Application form (Annex A), the applicant declares accepting, in case where he/she is awarded a fellowship, the Contractual conditions as laid down in the template contract.

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

DOCUMENTS TO FILL IN

ANNEX A: FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION:

- Part 1 : administrative information [MS Excel sheet]
- Part 2: complementary information and description of the research project [MS Word Format]

DOCUMENT FOR INFORMATION

ANNEX B: TEMPLATE CONTRACT