



## NeuroAdapt Fellowship – Frequently Asked Questions

### About the Programme

#### **Q1. What is the NeuroAdapt Fellowship?**

The NeuroAdapt Fellowship is a postdoctoral research programme co-funded by Horizon Europe and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), and co-funded by FutureNeuro, the Research Ireland Centre for Translational Brain Science. Led by RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences, it supports early-career researchers working on innovative, safer, and more effective diagnostic and therapeutic approaches for brain diseases.

Fellows carry out their projects within FutureNeuro, a world-leading SFI centre that integrates neurodiagnostics, neurotherapeutics, digital health, national clinical networks, and Ireland's digital health infrastructure. The programme offers an excellent research environment and a comprehensive training package combining hands-on research, interdisciplinary supervision, skills courses, and industry or clinical placements.

In line with the MSCA individual-driven mobility principle, applicants may choose their research field, host institution, supervisor, and secondment partners. Proposals can be submitted within three themes: diagnostics, therapeutics, and digital health.

#### **Q2. How many fellowships are available?**

A total of up to 11 fellowships (each lasting 24 months) will be awarded across two calls. Following Call 1, seven Fellows have already been recruited, and through Call 2 we aim to award up to four additional Fellowships.

#### **Q3. Who coordinates the programme?**

Led by *RCSI, University of Medicine and Health Sciences* through the *FutureNeuro, the Research Ireland Centre for Translational Brain Science*

#### **Q4. Which institutions can host fellows?**

Eight FutureNeuro partner institutions across Ireland:

- RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences
- TCD - Trinity College Dublin
- UCD - University College Dublin
- DCU - Dublin City University
- UoG - University of Galway
- UCC - University College Cork
- SETU - Southeast Technological University
- MU - Maynooth University



## Eligibility and Application

### Q5. Who can apply?

Applicants must be postdoctoral researchers by the Call open date.

This means:

- You must **hold a doctoral degree (PhD or equivalent)** by the Call open date, **OR**
- You must have **successfully defended your doctoral thesis** before the Call open date, **even if the degree has not yet been formally awarded.**

To be considered eligible, the thesis defense must be unconditional (i.e., no further corrections or requirements outstanding).

Medical doctor (MD) degrees are accepted only if they are equivalent to a doctoral degree **or** if the applicant can demonstrate an appointment in a role that requires doctoral equivalency (e.g., professorship).

MD degrees corresponding solely to basic medical training (as defined in Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC) do not qualify as a doctoral degree.

### Q6. Is there a limit on years since PhD?

No limit. Applicants with older PhDs should explain the personal and career benefit of joining this early-career programme.

### Q7. What are the fellowship types?

- **Incoming Fellowship:** Move to *Ireland*. You must not have lived or worked in Ireland for more than 12 of the previous 36 months before 15 January 2026.
- **Global Fellowship:** If based *in Ireland*, spending the first 12 months abroad. You must not have lived or worked in the outgoing country for more than 12 of the previous 36 months.

### Q8. How do I know if I should apply as an Incoming or a Global Fellow?

#### Incoming Fellowship

- You are applying to relocate to Ireland to carry out your research.
- You must not have lived or worked in Ireland for more than 12 months during the 36 months immediately before the call opening date (15 January 2025).
- Your 24-month fellowship will take place in Ireland at one of the FutureNeuro academic institutions, with a short secondment (3–6 months) possible elsewhere.

#### Global Fellowship

- You are currently based in Ireland or have lived and/or worked in Ireland for more than 12 months during the 36 months before the call opening date.
- You will spend the first 12 months (outgoing phase) in a host organisation outside of Ireland. You then return to Ireland for the final 12 months (“return phase”).



- You must not have lived or worked in your chosen outgoing country for more than 12 of the previous 36 months before the call opening date.

## **Q9. What if I apply for a Global Fellowship?**

Global Fellows complete:

1. **Outgoing phase** – 12 months abroad
2. **Return phase** – 12 months back in Ireland
3. **Secondment** – 3–6 months during the return phase

## **Q10. Is proof of English proficiency required?**

Documented proof of English proficiency is not required at application stage.

However, applicants must have sufficient English language proficiency (written and spoken) to undertake the application and interview process and to complete the fellowship effectively.

It is expected that the minimum accepted English language standards are:

TOEFL: 237 (computer-based), 580 (paper-based)

Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE/CAP): Overall score of 180, with a minimum of 169 in all components

Other English-language examinations of equivalent standard will also be accepted.

Applicants who have completed previous education through English may use this as evidence of proficiency.

## **Research and Supervision**

### **Q11. What are the main research themes?**

**There are three main research areas:**

1. **Diagnostics** – Identification and validation of novel disease markers, including genetic risk factors and biomarkers, in preclinical models and patients with brain conditions to predict changes in disease progression and responses to therapies.
2. **Therapeutics** – Identification and validation of novel treatment targets and the design of innovative treatment strategies using diverse approaches, including in silico models, preclinical studies, and human model systems, to enhance our understanding of brain diseases and develop effective therapies.
3. **Digital Health** – Design and evaluation of evidence-based, software driven interventions (e.g. mobile apps, wearable devices, online programmes) to prevent, manage or treat neurological and mental health conditions.



### **Q12. Do therapeutic approaches have to be drug-based?**

No. non-pharmacological projects are eligible if aligned with FutureNeuro's expertise and supervision.

### **Q13. How do I choose a supervisor?**

Where possible, applicants are encouraged to identify a Neuroadapt/FutureNeuro supervisor. Full support is not required at submission, but contact is recommended. Please visit our website to learn more about our PIs [Our People – FutureNeuro](#). Search by NeuroAdapt on the Role menu.

## **Application Process**

### **Q14. When is the deadline?**

10 April 2026 at 17:59 (Irish time).

Please submit your application before the deadline to ensure your submission is considered on time and to avoid any technical issues or late penalties

### **Q15. What documents are needed?**

- 10-page research proposal (template provided)
- CV (using the official format)
- Self-Ethics Statement
- Letter of support (for global fellowships only)

### **Q16. How are applications evaluated?**

Peer review by at least three experts. Evaluation criteria:

- *Excellence (50%)* – How strong and original your research idea is, how well it fits the Neuroadapt themes, and how good your training and supervision plans are. Reviewers also look at interdisciplinarity, gender balance, and how knowledge will be shared between you and your host.
- *Impact (30%)* – How the fellowship will help your career progress, how you'll share and apply your research results, and your potential to take on future leadership roles in academia, healthcare, or industry.
- *Implementation (20%)* – Whether your project plan is realistic and well-organized, if resources are used effectively, and if your host institution has the right support and infrastructure for your work.

### **Q17. What is the interview process?**

Top-scoring applicants are invited for an online interview. Final offers are made to the highest-ranked candidates.

### **Q 18: Can I submit more than one application?**

No. Only one application per applicant can be submitted in each call.



### **Q19: Can I reapply if I was not successful in the previous call?**

Yes. Resubmissions are welcome. Applicants from Call 1 may apply again in Call 2 as long as they still meet all eligibility criteria, including the Transnational Mobility Rule.

Please note: If you have spent additional time living or working in Ireland since Call 1, you may no longer meet the mobility requirement for the Incoming Fellowship (max 12 months in Ireland in the 36 months before the deadline).

## **Fellowship Terms**

### **Q20. What does the fellowship provide?**

- Based in Ireland with global placement opportunities and international secondments in industry and clinical settings
- Hosted by FutureNeuro, Research Ireland Centre for Translational Brain Science, with 30+ multidisciplinary supervisors to choose from
- Two-year, full-time contract with a competitive salary
- Research, training, and travel budget included
- Full access to institutional and national research supports
- Prestigious Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow recognition

### **Q21. What salary and allowances will I receive as a Fellow?**

Living Allowance – Base salary aligned with the Irish Universities Association (IUA) Postdoctoral Researcher Level 1 scale.

Mobility Allowance – €600 per month to support relocation to the host institute.

Family Allowance – €660 per month if you have dependent family members (spouse/partner or dependent children). Fellows who acquire dependents during the fellowship may become eligible.

All salary components are subject to taxes and statutory deductions under host institute policies and Irish law. The Host Institute determines the gross salary and covers employer costs.

Please note that the exact salary you receive will depend on your host institution, as each university applies different pension and tax contribution rates. As a result, net (take-home) pay may vary slightly between host organisations.

Minimum gross salary is €44,385 per year and it includes the living allowance and mobility allowance (without family allowance).

### **Q22. Who is eligible for the family allowance?**

You may qualify for the family allowance if, prior to or during your fellowship, you are married, in a civil partnership recognised in your country of origin, or have dependent



children. Proof of family status will be required before your contract is issued. All documents provided should be in English.

### **Q23. Will I receive support for research and professional development?**

Yes, and it includes the following:

- Research Consumables: Up to €900 per month of the Fellowship completed.
- Travel and Training: Up to €200 per month of the Fellowship completed (conference travel, secondments, training).
- Individual Training: Up to €1,500 per Fellow for additional professional development, subject to approval.
- Core training including workshops, summer schools, and professional development sessions, organised by the NeuroAdapt team.

### **Q24. What other benefits and support are provided?**

- Access to host institute facilities, administrative support, and welfare services.
- Induction training covering IT security, data protection, health & safety, and practical guidance on living in Ireland (including tax-incentive schemes like the Annual Travel Pass and Bike to Work).
- Opportunity to participate in NeuroAdapt programme-wide training, workshops, and events, and contribute to their design and delivery

### **Q25. What are the secondment requirements?**

A **3–6 month secondment** (within the 24-month project) at an organisation different from your host—ideally industry or clinical, but another university is also acceptable. Please note, if you are a Global Fellow, your secondment should take place during 12 months of your return phase.

## **Relocation and Family Support**

### **Q26. What support is available for relocating to Ireland?**

Non-EU fellows may use Ireland's **Hosting Agreement Scheme**, which allows spouses and dependents to relocate and spouses to work. [Fast Track Work Permit for Non-EU R&D \(Hosting Agreement Scheme\) | EURAXESS](https://www.euraxess.ie/hosting-agreement-scheme)

## **Contacts and Further Information**

For any questions about eligibility, fellowship types, or the application process, please contact the programme office at [neuroadapt@rcsi.ie](mailto:neuroadapt@rcsi.ie)

**Programme website:** [futureneurocentre.ie/neuroadapt](http://futureneurocentre.ie/neuroadapt)

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