

SRNSFG Early Career Researchers' Fellowship to visit ERC Grantee

The initiative aims to provide opportunities to the researchers of Georgia supported by LEPL Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia (SRNSFG) to join ERC teams and increase their international exposure with leading European Research Centers and universities. The call will support early career scientists in all disciplines to share international standards, to have access to established ERC projects and to develop competences before they apply themselves for an ERC grant. The purpose of this call is to stimulate researchers to apply to the three types of ERC grants (Starting Grant, Consolidator Grant and Advanced Grant), and thereby increase the success rate of their ERC grant applications.

The call shall be implemented and grants issued by the SRNSFG, operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, in accordance with the ERC Guidelines and relevant local regulatory documents.

Successful applicants are early career researchers, who conduct scientific research in accredited public or private research universities or research centers in Georgia. Applicants must be citizens of Georgia currently residing in Georgia, shall have sufficient fluency in written and spoken English (or the language of the receiving country) and be affiliated to accredited research universities or research centers of Georgia.

Eligibility time-window: maximum 12 years after PhD (or equivalent degree) by the time applicable call is open.

The call is open to researchers working in all scientific fields (OECD/EUROSTAT classificatory) 1-7 (<http://rustaveli.org.ge/en/Classification/page/1016>).

Call publication date and deadlines:

August 2018 (*will be modified, depending on the feedback from ERC and from the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia*). Application open all year round.

Financial terms and duration of the visit:

Maximum amount of fellowship is 35 000 GEL per year for 5-month projects (10 900 EUR including EUR 2 000 per month for accommodation and daily allowance for 5 months and 900 for travel as of round trip flight cost and ground transportation to the destination of the research internship). For a 3-month fellowship the budget requested can be 6900 EUR (2 000 EUR * 3 months + 900 EUR travel) and for a 4-month fellowship the budget requested can be 8900 EUR (2 000 EUR * 4 months + 900 EUR travel). The fellowship schemes by different duration are as follows:

- 5-month fellowship – 10 900 EUR
- 4-month fellowship – 8 900 EUR
- 3-month fellowship – 6 900 EUR

The fixed monthly fellowship (2 000 EUR per month) covers accommodation, internal transportation and daily allowance. If applicable, any extra costs (i.e. fee for access to library and other academic facilities, or other institutional registration fees) required by the host institution for the fellowship can also be funded additionally (maximum EUR 500), but the total fellowship amount should not exceed 35 000 GEL per fellow.

It is also possible to have 3.5- and 4.5-month fellowships. In these cases the monthly fellowship will be issued proportionally to the duration of the fellowship (1000 EUR per half month).

The total budget of the programme is: 210 000 GEL (EUR 65 400) per year.

Up to 6 fellowships can be issued per year with a maximum eligible budget per fellow (GEL 35 000 / EUR 10 900).

If the requested budget per applicant is by chance not maximum, there is a possibility to fund a larger number of fellowships as long as the yearly maximum amount (EUR 65400) is not exceeded.

Evaluation procedure:

As a part of the application, the applicant is requested to have elaborated and provided an outline of a scientific project before applying to the call. After completing the fellowship and returning back to Georgia, a selected applicant is required to submit the proposal to the next appropriate call ERC call (StG, CoG, AdG).

An evaluation committee consisting of independent external experts (not affiliated to SRNSFG) of relevant fields accomplishes the evaluation of proposals using 'excellence' as main evaluation criteria and assessing the applicants' potential to be awarded an ERC grant. The composition of the evaluation committee will only be established once the applications have been received by the SRNSFG. Permission and preliminary agreement from ERC PI(s) and HI (by way of a letter of support of the proposed host researcher and institution) is a compulsory element of the application.

Estimated end of evaluation and publication of results: December 2018.

Estimated start period of the fellowship: I - II quarters of 2019.

Applications are to be submitted to the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia.

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Forms and additional documentation has to be filled in accordance with the call specific terms of reference, which is expected to be published in August 2018.

Assessment criteria and evaluation of excellence

I - Excellence of the Research Project

1. Ground breaking nature
2. Potential impact
3. Scientific Approach

II - Excellence of the Principal Investigator

1. Intellectual capacity
2. Creativity
3. Commitment

#	Criterion	A/B/C categorization A: 7-9 B: 4-6 C: 1-3	Score & comment (min. score 3 max. score 9)
I	Excellence of the Research Project 1. Ground breaking nature 2. Potential impact 3. Scientific Approach		
II	Excellence of the Principal Investigator 1. Intellectual capacity 2. Creativity 3. Commitment		
III	Potential of the applicant to be awarded an ERC grant (Yes / No):	Yes	No
IV	Research proposal's compliance with the ongoing research subject of the ERC Principal Investigator (Yes / No):	Yes	No
Total Score (min. 2; max. 18):			
Summarizing Comment: (in line with the evaluation criterion and written scores):			

Notes regarding criteria III and IV: In case of a negative evaluation (No) for the criteria III and IV, the proposal will not be considered for approval.