FAQ - Contents

EXPERT REVIEWERS

What does 'intersectoral, non-academic' mean?

This refers to our non-academic partners (e.g. industrial collaborators). For each remote peer review (which accounts for 70% of the final marks in terms of weighting), each proposal will be assessed by 3 experts from our growing database (representation from each gender and 1 non-academic is required on this panel). A fundamental underpinning of the fellowship is the fact that it is 'academically led but industry informed'. In addition, there is a programme KPI aimed at targeting this key aspect of our Centre and our engagement.

- **KPI 5** At least 35% reviewers from the non-academic sector in the Reviewer Database

SUPERVISION

What is the 'Capacity to Supervise' rule?

The 'capacity to supervise' exists to ensure that "popular" supervisors or institutions do not take on too many fellows, and to ensure high quality supervision and research environments. Hence, once a main supervisor hosts a fellow they should not be allowed to host a second one as **main** supervisor in the same call.

Does an applicant have to select a supervisor and then discuss with the supervisor specific project ideas or does an applicant nominate a supervisor? Can supervision requests be declined?

Yes, the former is correct. On the SMART 4.0 website (**smart.confirm.ie**; *Partners – Academic & Industry*), there will be a quick reference guide for applicants, highlighting which Research Performing Organisations affiliated with CONFIRM are focused on what research theme. Prior to this, applicants must **register** their interest, providing advance info on their research area(s) expertise, and a brief overview of their areas of interest. Once deemed as suitable candidates, access will be provided to the proposal closed submission area of the website. It is mandatory for applicants to engage with their 'preferred' supervisor and only through that engagement can they author their proposal. It is vital that support for the submitted proposal is confirmed by the supervisor. The submitted proposal cannot be considered without this.

PROSPECTIVE FELLOWS, APPLICANT INFORMATION

I'm not a citizen of a European country. Can I apply to SMART 4.0?

Researchers are welcome from any EU member state, associated country, overseas country or territory linked to EU member states, or associated third countries.

What are the call dates for SMART 4.0 fellowships?

Call 1 will open 1st October 2019; **Call 2** will start 1st July 2020 – all calls will be open for 3 months.

Can someone with research experience but without a PhD apply?

Yes - Applicants must be Experienced Researchers as per the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions definition:

At the time of recruitment, applicants must be in possession of a doctoral degree or, if the applicant does not have a doctoral degree and is not in the process of completing one, they should have at least 4 years of full-time equivalent research experience. Full-time equivalent research experience applies to researchers who have been working on their PhD for at least four years and are near completion and those who have four years of full time experience in research, but are not working towards PhD completion (examples of such researchers include: someone with MD (medical doctor) or a research assistant in academia or industry).

How can an applicant calculate the required research experience when applying for a SMART 4.0 fellowship?

All research undertaken after the applicant has gained a university degree/diploma giving them access to doctoral studies (the degree/diploma must entitle the holder to embark on doctoral studies without having to acquire any further qualifications) can be counted. Research experience in an organisation where research activity was only part of applicant's duties will not be counted as full-time research experience. Applicants lacking the requisite years of full-time postgraduate research experience by the time of recruitment are not eligible.

A potential applicant moved to Ireland on 1st October 2018. Are they eligible if they apply before 1st October 2019?

No - the mobility rule requires that the applicant has **not** been in Ireland for more than 12 months prior to the call **deadline** (i.e. Call 1 deadline – 31st December 2019).

An applicant has been resident in Ireland for 9 months prior to the call deadline. In addition to their residency here, they were in Ireland on a tourist visa over three separate months. Is time spent in Ireland under a tourist visa counted in the max 12 months in the three years prior to application?

To comply with the mobility requirements, applicants must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in Ireland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before the call deadline. Short stays (such as holidays), compulsory national services (such as mandatory military service) and procedures for obtaining refugee status under the Geneva Convention are not counted.

Would an Irish national be eligible to apply?

Yes - provided they meet the mobility (and other eligibility) requirements.

Should an applicant have their PhD finished by the time of application?

Under the eligibility requirements of Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, applicants must be "experienced researchers" which means that they must, at the time of application, be in possession of a doctoral degree (regardless

of actual duration of the degree as long as the degree was awarded) or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research (FTER) experience.

Note: having passed a viva voce exam is not sufficient; the degree must be awarded by the application deadline if FTER experience if not applicable.

What kind of experience constitutes four years of full-time equivalent research (FTER) experience?

For the purposes of the SMART 4.0 programme, research experience refers to "scientific research". Principally, this involves the systematic investigation of scientific theories and hypotheses.

If a candidate has already held (or is currently holding) a MSCA award, does this disqualify or disadvantage them?

No - a previous MSCA award does not disqualify or disadvantage a SMART 4.0 applicant.

An applicant has applied for SMART 4.0 fellowship programme before but their application was not successful. Can they apply again?

Yes - and this is very much encouraged. If unsuccessful during previous calls, an applicant will receive appropriate feedback to assist in future submissions.

What is the definition of 'family', does a husband/wife and no children count as 'family' in this case? For the family allowance, does that mean you can get it once you are married?

Family is defined as persons linked to the researcher (i) by marriage, or (ii) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country or region where this relationship was formalised; or (iii) as dependent children who are actually being maintained by the researcher. Therefore, a husband with no children still constitutes a 'family' in this case. Family status of a researcher will be determined at the time of application and will not be revised during the lifetime of the fellowship. SFI may request official documentation to support family allowance claims (self-statements are not be considered as legitimate proof).