EDGE

Cutting Edge Training - Cutting Edge Technology

EDGE Programme
Guide for Applicants
Call 2 - 2017

Please read this document **CAREFULLY** before registering as an applicant

Important dates

Application deadline	1st November, 23:59 UTC
Peer review	November / December 2017
Interviews*	January 2018
Fellowships to be awarded	31st January 2018

* Please note these dates are indicative and subject to change

Revision History	
Version 2.0	Released on Call 2 open date, 1st August 2017

Table of Contents

1. Purpose of the Guide for Applicants

This guide provides practical information to potential applicants to assist in preparing and submitting an application for an EDGE Postdoctoral Fellowship. In addition, it provides a general overview of the scheme and the assessment process.

The information presented within this document is also available on the EDGE website (www.edge-research.eu). Applicants will also submit their application via the link on this website.

2. The EDGE Programme

2.1 About EDGE

EDGE is Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND Action, led by Trinity College Dublin on behalf of a group of academic institutions from across Ireland. In 2017, EDGE awarded 29 Fellowships, and we plan to award 42 more in 2018 and 2019, each of 24 month duration. EDGE is also a training and development programme for scientific excellence, offering a unique combination of interdisciplinary research themes, career development opportunities and industry engagement to the community of Fellows we recruit.

EDGE leverages the strengths and assets of three existing Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) National Research Centres: AMBER, CONNECT and ADAPT. These Centres together perform world-leading research on the three main pillars of ICT.
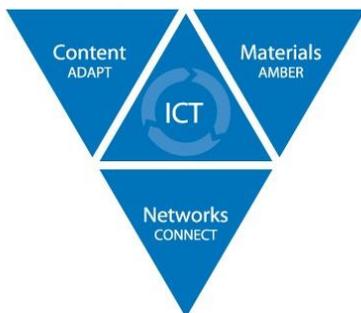
AMBER offers expertise in advanced materials that will play a pivotal role in future systems and devices.

CONNECT's focus is on future networks that will underpin the services the world needs.

ADAPT brings cutting-edge innovation in digital content.

EDGE Fellows will work at the interfaces of the three Centres, in highly interdisciplinary projects, sharing expertise and adding value across the ICT research landscape. Importantly, industry partners will have a primary role in defining, executing and supporting the projects, and will take an active part in the Fellow's progression, through secondments, industry events and specialised training. Through EDGE we will form the next generation of thought leaders in the ICT field.

In the next few pages we describe the function and goals, both unique and complementary of the three Centres. Each Centre consists of multiple academic partners, and depending on the choice of supervisor, the EDGE Fellow may be based in any of the listed institutions. Training will be offered and coordinated across the community, both in project-based, individualised technical skills, as well as general training in aspects of relevance to all recruited Fellows, including advanced research techniques, transferable skills and experience in industry.

2.2 The Centres

EDGE is supported by 3 SFI National Research Centres: AMBER, ADAPT & CONNECT.

The AMBER (Advanced Materials and BioEngineering Research) Centre provides a partnership between leading researchers and relevant industry in the field of materials science. It is jointly hosted in Trinity College Dublin by CRANN and the Trinity Centre for Bioengineering (TCBE), with partners University College Cork, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, University of Limerick, and NUI Galway. AMBER brings together Ireland's leading researchers working across the disciplines of Bioengineering, Chemistry, Immunology, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Physics. Website: www.ambercentre.ie

The ADAPT Centre for Global Excellence in Digital Content and Media Innovation combines world-class expertise of researchers at four universities (Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, University College Dublin and Dublin Institute of Technology) with that of its industry partners to produce ground-breaking digital content innovations. ADAPT brings together over 110 researchers with a strong track record of bridging research and innovations to industry. Website: www.adaptcentre.ie

CONNECT is the world leading research Centre for Future Networks and Communications. CONNECT is funded under the SFI Centres Programme as well as the European Regional Development Fund. The Centre engages with over 35 companies including large multinationals, SMEs and start-ups, and brings together world-class expertise from ten Irish institutes to create a one-stop-shop for telecommunications research, development and innovation. Website: www.connectcentre.ie

2.3 The Institutes

Depending on the choice of supervisor, the Fellowship will be awarded such that the Fellow will be an employee of one of the following institutions, all affiliated with one of more of the three Centres.

As Ireland's university on the world stage, Trinity is recognised for academic excellence and a transformative student experience. The historic campus is located in the heart of Dublin city centre at the meeting place of the retail and cultural districts. With a tradition of scholarship spanning more than four centuries, Trinity is home to talented inquiring minds, a liberal education, and research conducted at the frontiers of disciplines.

Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) has been an integral part of the Irish Higher Education system for more than a century. In that time it has continued to adapt and expand its provision to reflect a changing society and the wider economic environment. DIT is now one of Ireland's largest and most innovative university-level institutions.

A comprehensive, dual-sector doctoral-awarding institution, DIT combines the academic excellence of a traditional university with professional, career-oriented learning, preparing graduates for productive leadership roles.

University College Dublin has its origins in the mid-nineteenth century under the leadership of the renowned educationalist John Henry Cardinal Newman. Since its foundation in 1854, the University has flourished and made a unique and substantial contribution to the creation of modern Ireland, based on successful engagement with Irish society on every level and across every sphere of activity. UCD is one of Europe's leading research-intensive universities; an environment where undergraduate education, masters and PhD training, research, innovation and community engagement form a dynamic spectrum of activity.

DCU is a young, dynamic and ambitious university with a distinctive mission to transform lives and societies through education, research and innovation. Since admitting its first students in 1980, DCU has grown in both student numbers and size and is now a multi campus environment in Glasnevin, located just north of Dublin city. DCU is recognised nationally and internationally as a centre of academic excellence with over 16,000 students and it is regularly featured among the top young universities globally as measured by the Times Higher Education Top 100 under 50 and the QS Top 50 under 50.

Since the 18th century, researchers and scholars at Maynooth have fostered a spirit of inquiry and scholarship. That tradition of intellectual freedom informs the principles and values that make Maynooth University a uniquely scholarly and research intense institution. To this day, scholarly rigour, academic freedom, and collegial collaboration remain the hallmarks of the "Maynooth Researcher". As a scholarly community in the 21st century, Maynooth now works in diverse ways to inquire and discover, to create, conserve, disseminate and apply knowledge, to prepare the researchers of tomorrow and to engage with the problems and challenges that face modern society.

For over 200 years RCSI has played a major role in medical education and training in Ireland. Founded in 1784 to train surgeons, today the College provides extensive education and training in the healthcare professions at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The RCSI Research Institute is one of Ireland's foremost research centres. RCSI is committed to performing high levels of research activity, to commercialising intellectual property arising from its research, and to developing collaborative links with industry, educational and research institutions both nationally and internationally.

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) is a university-level institution in the South-East of Ireland with over 10,000 students and 1,000 staff. WIT is committed to being a research-led Institute, recognised for its distinctive, high quality centres of research. Its strategy is to create substantial centres of excellence for world-class research in which individual scholars and research groups are given maximum freedom to pursue their investigations. Its academic research community is networked into the global research community and quality assured through collaborations and peer review publications.

Founded in 1845, we've been inspiring students for 170 years. NUI Galway has earned international recognition as a research-led university with a commitment to top quality teaching. There is a vibrant research ecosystem at our university. This dynamic community attracts researchers, academics, entrepreneurs and students of the highest calibre.

The University of Limerick (UL) is located on the west coast of Ireland along the picturesque River Shannon and enjoys an unspoiled natural environment blended with state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities. With close to 12,000 students, including more than 2,000 international students each year, UL is a young and enterprising university with a proud record of innovation in education and scholarship. With strong links to business and industry, UL excels at translational research which aims to accelerate the practical application of academic research to benefit society. UL houses some of the most innovative and successful research centres in Ireland.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) boasts many top class facilities including its award-winning Library & IT Building and its world class laboratories. Research and Innovation is one of the three pillars of CIT activity. CIT has a community of over 180 researchers and is involved in research projects with more than 150 companies at any time. CIT's research mission is to engage in excellent research that has social and economic impact in the region and beyond. CIT researchers work with a wide range of world class international collaborators in Europe, India, Russia, China and Brazil.

UCC was established in 1845 as one of three Queen's Colleges, established in the reign of Queen Victoria, and named after her. Nowadays University College Cork (UCC) is an internationally competitive, research-led University that plays a key role in the development of Ireland's knowledge-based economy. UCC's mission is to advance excellence in teaching, research and the quality of the student experience. UCC's institutional research strategy focuses on creating and supporting world-leading clusters of researchers, building on the research strengths of the University.

Established with a mission to support industry and academia in driving research to market, Tyndall National Institute is one of Europe's leading research centres in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) research and development and the largest research facility of its type in Ireland. Established in 2004 as a successor to the National Microelectronics Research Centre (NMRC founded in 1982) at University College Cork, the Institute hosts over 460 researchers, engineers and support staff, including a full-time postgraduate cohort of 135 students, generating over 200 peer-reviewed publications each year.

2.4 About Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

Internationally respected in industry and academia, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship is a recognised mark of research excellence. The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), named after the double Nobel Prize winning Polish-French scientist famed for her work on radioactivity, and aim to support researchers at all stages of their careers irrespective of nationality. Researchers working across all disciplines, from life-saving healthcare to 'blue-sky' science, are eligible for funding, typically through fixed-term fellowships.

Mobility, training and personal development are key factors in any MSCA scheme. Therefore, the actions also support industry doctorates, combining academic research study with work in companies, and often include innovative training that enhances employability and career development.

What are the long-term benefits of an MSCA Fellowship?

- MSCA Fellows' publications are more-often cited than equivalent peers, and are more frequently published on influential scientific journals.
- MSCA fellows are more successful in applying for European Research Council (ERC)'s competitive grants for high quality research.
- MSCA Fellows achieve professorship titles more frequently than others, and are more likely to hold principal investigator position.

Links to more information on MSCA are given in Section 9.

EDGE as a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action

EDGE is a COFUND Action, on the MSCA programme. This means that EDGE fellowships are part funded by the European Commission, and part by the three SFI Research Centres; AMBER, CONNECT and ADAPT. While the prestige and long-term benefit of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship remains for our fellows, the disciplinary field of the programme is focused on three thematic areas (see section 3) with the track record of the host institutions in these areas assured.

In contrast to the MSCA Individual Fellowship schemes, where the candidate is required to propose and execute their own training and development programme alongside their technical project, in EDGE this support will be designed, facilitated and monitored by the EDGE Management team. The Fellows therefore benefit from a network of peers across Ireland.

2.5 Working in Ireland

Why choose Ireland?

The Irish Government invests over €782 million annually in research in Ireland's higher education institutions. The result is that, despite being a small country in population terms, Ireland's higher education institutions are in the top 1% of research institutions globally for research impact in 19 fields, spanning natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities.

Many of the world's biggest and best companies have located strategic research facilities here in Ireland. The top 10 ICT companies all maintain a presence, with several choosing to base their European, Middle Eastern and African (EMEA) operations from Irish facilities. The driving factors are typically economic, but companies frequently cite access to world class innovation, alongside the flexibility and adaptability of the population, as reasons to stay and expand. In Irish research and innovation, you'll find a friendly ecosystem that sees academic researchers working hand-in-hand with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as large multinational companies, and funding agencies extremely willing to support them.

Please visit http://www.iua.ie/international for more information on relocating to Ireland as a researcher.

Visas & Work Permits

If you are a citizen of an EU/EEA (European Economic Area) nation, except for Bulgaria and Romania, or a Swiss national, you do not require a permit to work or study in Ireland.

Otherwise, you will be required to fulfil several conditions to seek permission to work or study in Ireland. The eligibility requirements and contractual terms of the EDGE programme are designed to fulfil these conditions

and access the 'Hosting Agreement Scheme'. However, you must personally review all information on visas and work permits to ensure you can work in Ireland before applying.

The Hosting Agreement Scheme offers a free and fast track service for visa applications for higher education institutions and the private sector, who wish to recruit non-EU researchers to the country. Under the Scheme visas are issued rapidly and work permits are not required. Researcher's families can accompany them immediately and use public schooling. Family members have access to the job market and the researchers can stay on to look for a job after their contract ends.

For more information about visas and work permits visit http://euraxess.ie/academic/page.aspx?SP=3

Living in Ireland

Ireland is renowned for its friendly citizens and warm welcomes and has been voted the 'World's friendliest country' by Lonely Planet. As an English-speaking European nation, it is often seen as a gateway to Europe by the rest of the world. Today, Ireland is a dynamic, lively, modern country with a young population and a successful, technologically orientated economy. Ireland also remains a country with deep heritage, where tradition, culture, music, conversation, time to relax, listen and make friends are all important.

For more information about Ireland as a place to live and work including travel, food, shopping, accommodation, climate and practicalities see www.livinginireland.ie

3. About the Fellowships

EDGE Fellowships are for experienced researchers of any nationality, seeking a prestigious career developing position in one of ten of Ireland's third-level institutes. EDGE aims to form the next generation of thought leaders in ICT; developing research, technical and other skills, including the ability to actively interact, collaborate and engage with industry.

EDGE Fellows will be researchers who are technically strong in their own discipline, and capable of performing high-value, interdisciplinary research, complementing and supporting their peers.

EDGE welcomes applications from candidates who have had career breaks and are looking to return to a research-based career, and from candidates who have had a non-traditional career path, including those who have built up research experience but who may not have gained a doctoral qualification (see Eligibility Criteria).

The Fellowships are aimed at researchers relocating to Ireland, and therefore mobility is required under the eligibility rules – see section 4.

Research Themes

The Fellowships will be aligned to one of the three themes under the EDGE programme:

Advanced Materials & BioEngineering

Digital Content Innovations

Future Networks & Communications

These themes are further subdivided into research topics, which are linked to the available supervisors' specialist fields. A full list of research topics can be found at the end of this guide and on the EDGE website. Applicants are freely available to select the theme and topic of their research proposal, if it is supported by a supervisor operating within that theme.

Fellowship Categories

Three levels of Fellowship will be offered, relating to the level of experience of the candidate. The financial allowances (see section 7.2 Financial Aspects) vary with each level.

EDGE Fellowship Level	Level of experience required
Level 1 Research Fellow – New Postdoctoral Researcher	Less than 4 years post-PhD (or equivalent) experience
Level 2 Research Fellow – Experienced Postdoctoral Researcher	4 or more post-PhD (or equivalent) experience
Level 3 Research Fellow – Senior Postdoctoral Researcher	6 or more years post-PhD (or equivalent) experience

Please see Section 4 (Eligibility) for definitions of experience and reference dates.

Training & Development

The EDGE programme is designed as a ***full research training and career development programme***, with a series of training and career development activities and opportunities offered to the Fellows. Career coaching will be provided on a one-to-one level, and guidance given on leveraging the available schemes in the EDGE institutions and beyond. The Fellow will be helped to build their networking opportunities towards their individual career goals.

Each Fellow will go through a scientific training needs analysis process at the start of the fellowship. This will result in an agreed Training & Development Plan (TDP) for each fellow, defined within the first three months. Along with the research and technical objectives, the TDP will also indicate a clear set of training and development goals. The TDP will be reviewed on an annual basis and revised as necessary.

Secondments

All EDGE Fellows are required to undertake a secondment with an industry partner that suits their research, training and development needs. The three Centres that form the EDGE programme have strong and well-established links with over 70 companies, including major multinationals as well as SMEs. Fellows will therefore be able to choose from a wide range of companies, and will be guided by their Supervisors and EDGE management in selecting and shaping a secondment that best suits their scientific training goals. If possible, the secondment should be defined in the research proposal by the applicant. Otherwise, companies or industry groups that will be approached may be proposed. In the latter case applicants should give evidence that suitable companies exist and are receptive to collaboration.

Mentoring

In addition to supervision, Fellows will also have access to a mentoring programme to assist them in achieving their research and career development goals. Mentoring is a process of developing a working relationship between two people, where one of the pair is an experienced person working with a less experienced person to help develop their expertise, knowledge and confidence. Mentors are considered successful in their careers and are distinct from the role of supervisor, in that their role is to provide guidance and advice and, importantly, to ask open questions to develop the mentee's self-reflection, self-reliance and problem solving skills.

Industry Events

The EDGE institutions all strive to create a culture of entrepreneurship. Regular industry events organised with EDGE will provide each Fellow with a further opportunity to interact with industry.

EDGE Annual Plenary & Multidisciplinary Challenge Competition

Every year EDGE will have a Plenary session, where all Fellows will come together and present their work to each other, their Supervisors, EDGE Management, industry representatives and other interested parties. All Fellows will be able to present posters and demos, with EDGE Level 2 and 3 Fellows asked to give short seminars on their research.

While Fellows will interact with each other through training and network events, nothing fosters interdisciplinary research as much as actually working together. Each year EDGE fellows will form interdisciplinary teams, with fellows from at least two centres, and work towards a creative solution to one of 10 set commercial or public interest challenges. The teams will present their solution as part of the Annual Plenary and a panel of judges will award a winner in each category. Each year the winning teams will be awarded a prize of €500.

Additional Training

Fellows will also have the scope to choose courses beyond the EDGE Training Plan and additional training will be encouraged. All recruiting universities have staff development programmes available that can more broadly complement the Fellows' transferable skill development within EDGE. For female Fellows, Women in Science and Engineering Research (WiSER) organizes a number of opportunities for personal and professional development.

4. Eligibility Criteria

4.1 Applicant Eligibility

For Call 2, the 'time of recruitment' corresponds to the end of the application process, on notification of success and intent to offer a contract at one of the host institutions – 31st January 2018.

- Applicants may be of any nationality
- Applicants must be fluent in English (written and spoken)
- Applicants must comply with the Transnational Mobility Rule: researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of their host organisation for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the time of recruitment.
    - Compulsory national service and/or short stays such as holidays can be ignored

- For refugees covered by the 1951 Refugee Convention (Geneva Convention), the refugee procedure (i.e. before refugee status is conferred) will not be counted as 'period of residence/activity in the country of the beneficiary'. This is regardless of whether he/she was active in research at that time.
- Applicants must be Experienced Researchers as per the MSCA definition: at the time of the recruitment, applicants must be in possession of a doctoral degree (i.e have successfully completed all the formal requirements to obtain a doctorate) or, if the applicant has does not have a doctoral degree, they should have at least 4 years of full-time equivalent research experience. Full-Time Equivalent Research Experience is measured from the date when a researcher obtained a degree which would allow them to pursue a PhD.
- To apply for the Fellowship on each Level offered, Applicants must, in addition, have either:
    - Less than 4 years additional research experience to be eligible for Level 1 fellowship
    - More than 4 years additional research experience to be eligible for Level 2
    - More than 6 years additional research experience to be eligible for Level 3
- Research experience is defined as being in a role where the primary driver is research rather than commercial gain. Job titles such as 'Research Assistant' would qualify, or a position in a group that conducts research for the purpose of publication or generation of intellectual property.

4.2 Proposal Eligibility

- The proposal must be complete and in English
- The proposal must be received on or before the call deadline (1st November 2017 @ 23:59h) through the online application system
- Only one application per applicant may be submitted per call (resubmissions for the second call from unsuccessful applicants are encouraged)
- The proposals must adhere to the ethical standards applicable to the MSCA and EDGE programmes
- The proposal must be within an EDGE theme and research topic, and identify an EDGE Supervisor
- The proposal must be able to be conducted while hosted at the institution of the EDGE supervisor
- The proposal must contain details of a secondment to industry (see section 3)
- The Supervisor named for the project must agree to act as supervisor for the duration of the Fellowship

5. How to Apply

Applicants for the EDGE Fellowships will be first required to submit a written research proposal, along with evidence of eligibility. Once eligibility is confirmed, the proposal will be reviewed by an independent panel. Top ranked submissions will pass to the next stage, where candidate Fellows will be invited for interview. Those successful at the interview stage will be informed of intent to offer a Fellowship position at one of the EDGE institutions.

The actual start of the fellowship will occur after an employment contract is issued by the institution, and right to work in Ireland has been obtained. Fellows may also choose to start later, eg. if their present situation requires a notice period. To take full advantage of the training programme, Fellows are preferred to start within 4 months of the time of recruitment, that is before July 2018.

5.1 Overview of the Process

Publication of the Fellowship Call

The application process starts with the publication of the EDGE Fellowship Call, along with this document and templates for the proposals. An online application system, accessed from the EDGE website (www.edge-research.eu) is open for the duration of call, approximately 12 weeks. The online application system will close at 23:59hrs UTC on the date of the application deadline – 1st November 2017.

Preparation for Applying

Applicants are encouraged to start preparation as early as possible. Please review all relevant documentation, including this Guide, FAQs and Application Templates published on the EDGE website in the Application Documents section.

At the outset, underlined: applicants must contact the EDGE Supervisor (Principle Investigator) with whom they would like to work with on their research project should they be successful. Contact details can be found on the EDGE website, with Supervisors grouped by research topic. The Supervisor will confirm whether they are happy to work with the EDGE applicant on their chosen topic, and may offer advice on developing the research plan. The online application system will require applicants to name the supervisor when they apply.

At any stage, applicants may contact the EDGE management team via the contact details at the end of this document for support.

The Research Proposal

The research proposal is the most important part of the application, and will be submitted as a written document of no more than 8 pages (this page count does not include the title page, Gantt chart and ethics questionnaire). A template is provided on the EDGE website.

Note that the indicators of gender and other potential sources of bias may be removed from the proposal and your CV after submission, in the best effort to present only the research and your capacity to perform it to the review panel. Therefore you should avoid giving personal details such as gender, age or nationality in this document.

The research proposal will have three sections: EXCELLENCE, IMPACT and IMPLEMENTATION.

1. EXCELLENCE	
1.1 Quality and credibility of the research plan (level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects)	◦ Introduction, state-of-the-art, objectives and overview: the research question that will be addressed, the starting point and expected finish point / goal ◦ Research methodology and approach ◦ Originality and innovative aspects of the research programme ◦ The gender dimension in the research content (if relevant). This refers to any gender aspect of the research, not the gender of the applicant or supervisor ◦ The interdisciplinary aspects of the action, with particular note to the EDGE thematic areas (Advanced Materials & Bioengineering, Digital Content Innovations and Future Networks & Communications). How

	will your research benefit from interaction with other disciplines and are there any specific groups that you could approach?
	◦ The secondment(s) to industry that have been agreed or are proposed
	◦ The desired outcome, in terms of career possibilities for you as an independent researcher and new collaboration opportunities for the research group you will join.
1.2 Quality of transfer of knowledge between the applicant and the host	Training in a variety of technical and non-technical skills will be provided as part of the EDGE programme. In this section you should describe briefly:
	◦ How you as an experienced researcher hope to take advantage of the fellowship period, including the training aspect, and any skill areas you want to improve on during the execution of your proposal.
	◦ Outline any previously acquired knowledge or capability that you may transfer to the research group you will join, the wider group of EDGE institutions, and to your community of peers on the EDGE programme
1.3 Quality of the supervision and of the integration in the team/institution	Relevance of the experience of the Supervisor:
	◦ Provide details of the Supervisor relevant to your research proposal: their track record in the field, including any international collaborations, projects or publications.
	◦ Provide evidence of the match between your research proposal and the capabilities of the laboratory and group you will join.
	◦ If you require additional resources and support outside of your supervisor's network, explain where they can be found.
2. IMPACT	
2.1 Enhancing the potential and future career prospects of the researcher	◦ Explain the expected impact of the planned research and training on your career prospects after the fellowship. Which new competences will be acquired?
	◦ You should describe how the proposed research and training will contribute to your further professional development as an independent/mature researcher, or the relevance of the proposed research if you have alternative goals.
2.2 Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the action results	◦ Describe how the new knowledge generated during your fellowship will be disseminated and exploited, e.g. communicated, transferred into other research settings or, if appropriate, commercialised.
	◦ What is the dissemination strategy - targeted at scientists, potential users and/or to the wider research and innovation community – that will achieve the optimal impact?
	◦ You may make reference to the "Dissemination & Exploitation" section of the H2020 Online Manual.[1]

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/grants/grant-management/dissemination-of-results_en.htm

	◦ Concrete planning for proposal section 2.2 must be included in the Work Plan (proposal section 3.1).
2.3. Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the action activities to different target audiences	◦ Describe how and why your research should be communicated to various stakeholders – peers, industry or interested public ◦ Refer to the H2020 guidelines "Communicating EU research and innovation guidance for project participants" as well as to the "communication" section of the H2020 Online Manual.[2] ◦ Concrete planning for proposal section 2.3 must be included in the Gantt Chart
3. IMPLEMENTATION	
3.1 The Work Plan	◦ The proposed research work plan should be designed so that the desired impact can be achieved in a measurable way. For each Work Package (WP; there must be at least one) please describe in the following format. - WP X: TITLE - Duration (Month Y to Month Z) - Key technical objectives / goals ◦ Main tasks required to reach the work package, bullet point format preferred. Describe each task, highlighting new knowledge learned or developed, and stating clearly the endpoint and relation to the other tasks or work packages. ◦ Linked deliverables or milestones. ◦ Linked dissemination or public engagement activities. ◦ Elapsed time should always be in terms of number of months from the start of the fellowship.
3.2 Risk planning	◦ We seek ambitious research plans, and therefore a degree of uncertainty will be present in any successful proposal. Risks should be anticipated and prepared for ◦ Describe the potential risks associated with the implementation of your plan, and propose preventative and/or mitigating actions to reduce the likelihood of them occurring. ◦ Should there be any severe risks in the execution, (for example, a challenging intermediate goal that if cannot be achieved prevents any further progress), describe contingencies (alternative goals or workarounds) that could allow you to complete your fellowship.
Gantt Chart	◦ A Gantt Chart should be included (example given in the template) that gives the schedule for Work Packages, Deliverables, Milestones, Dissemination and Public Engagement activities and proposed Secondments
Ethics Self-Assessment	◦ Please complete the self-assessment; refer to section 6 of this guide

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[2] http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/grants/grant-management/communication_en.htm

Notes on the expected content of each section are given in the template application form. You should also refer to the evaluation criteria in section 5.2.

Please abide by the following formatting rules:

- All text must be readable (no less than 11pt in normal text; 10pt may be used in tables)
- References should be in footnotes, in 8 or 9pt font. All references count towards the page limit.
- Diagrams, plots and tables may be used; however, use of colour to indicate differences should be avoided in case the document is printed in black and white

Submission of the applications

Applications must be submitted via the '*Ex-Ordo*' online application system accessed from the EDGE website. To submit an application, you will be asked to register in the system, creating an individual login. Following registration, you can begin your application, save it and return to it at any time before the call closes.

The Ex-Ordo system normally handles conference paper review. Please therefore consider "Author" to mean you, the fellowship applicant, "Paper" to mean your application, and "Conference" to mean the start of the Fellowship programme. At the last stage, the system will request "Upload Abstract" at which stage you should upload your Fellowship Proposal.

The elements of the application that will need to be entered / submitted are:

Element	Details	Limits
Registration	On visiting the Ex-Ordo site for the first time, you will be asked for your email address, name and to set a unique password	
Title / Acronym	The title of the research proposal and a short name, entered directly into the application system	
Abstract	An overview of your research proposal, entered directly into the application system. This abstract is not assessed, but it will be viewed by experts when deciding if they are suitable to evaluate your proposal. It will also be published if your proposal is successful. Therefore it should contain only non-confidential information, and include an unambiguous description of your research proposal's concept.	300 words
Personal Details	Your details as the applicant, including your current university of institution, country, gender, year of PhD (or equivalent year – see section 4.1) and number of years' research experience – entered directly into the application system	
Theme / Topic Selection	Select the research topic from the list given	1 topic
Supervisor Selection	Enter the nominated EDGE Supervisor	
Additional Information	Enter the nominated EDGE Supervisor Indicate whether one or more ethics issues are present in the proposal, as determined by the self-assessment	Yes / No answers
Applicant Declaration	Select the checkboxes to declare your eligibility and suitability for the programme	Checkboxes

Supporting Documents	Upload: - Eligibility Statement, template provided - Your CV; template provided, 5 pages - Your ethics statement (optional if required) 2 pages	CV & Ethics: Min 11pt font, 2cm border
Research Proposal	Upload the research proposal. Use the Research Proposal template provided, which contains instructions for structure, and content.	Min. 11pt font, 2cm border. Tables & footnotes at least 10pt & 8pt resp.

After the closure of the online application system, applicants will be able to monitor the status of their application.

Eligibility Checking

After the call closes, all applications will first be checked for completeness and eligibility, using their eligibility statement and cross-check to the CV. All applicants will be informed about the results of eligibility checking via email and through their profile within the online application system. If an application is found ineligible, an explanation will be given.

Those applications that indicated one or more ethical issues in their review will be checked to see if the ethics statement is present.

Ethics Review

If the applicant answers 'yes' to any of the questions in the self-assessment (see section 6), they will have provided additional information in an Ethics Statement. In this case, an Ethical Review Panel (ERP) will check whether these issues have been adequately addressed by the applicant. The intent of the ethics review is to help applicants to understand and manage ethical issues - proposals given ethical clearance may proceed to the next stage; proposals without ethical clearance can be asked to add additional measures, or in extreme cases declared ineligible. The ERP may ask for additional information before coming to a decision.

Where Ethics Review is required, applicants will be informed of the outcome.

It should be noted that formal ethical approval for the project must be obtained by the applicant in conjunction with the host institute from the relevant ethics committee prior to the start of the project.

International Peer Review and Ranking

All eligible applications will undergo independent, international peer review. Each proposal will be evaluated by three independent assessors. Applications will be scored and ranked according the EDGE Assessment Criteria (Section 5.2). All applicants will be informed about the final score they achieved, how they ranked, and summary feedback from the assessors.

Interviews of Top Ranking Applicants

The set of top ranked applicants from each theme will be invited to the next phase – an interview lasting 30 minutes. The applicant will be asked to give a brief 10-minute presentation on his/her research proposal. The presentation should include an overview of the proposal, the motivation of the applicant to take up the

Fellowship, and details of specific career and training objectives of the applicant. The presentation will be followed by questions from the interview panel.

The interview may be attended in person or via teleconferencing facility. No advantage is conferred to those that attend in person, as we expect applications from all over the world.

The interview stage provides an opportunity for the EDGE management team to meet the candidates, discuss the research proposal and ensure that they have the desire and competency required for its execution. It will also give the candidates an opportunity to further develop their proposal, and to learn more about EDGE and the wider environment.

The final mark for each application will be comprised of the score for the written proposal and the interview, with equal weighting applied. Candidates will again be informed of their final score, ranking and feedback on their interview outcome.

Fellowship Offers for Successful Applicants

A maximum number of fellowships are available under each theme and by Fellowship level in the first call, and these will be offered to the top ranked applicants above the threshold. This maximum number will be defined by funding limitations in each theme.

Upon selection, successful applicants will be informed that they have passed evaluation, and will therefore be made an offer of an employment contract by one of the academic institutes of the EDGE programme (the institute which the applicant's supervisor is affiliated to). Prior to the institution giving a firm offer of a contract, the EDGE management and the institute may contact the Applicant's referees and request further documentary evidence to verify their eligibility. Should this check fail, the award may be withdrawn.

It is expected that successful Fellows will start the Fellowship at the earliest convenience within four months of acceptance. Given that mobility is a key feature of the programme, EDGE recognises that additional time may be required to allow a Fellow to complete their previous activities before the move to Ireland, and obtain visas if required. Consequently, the starting date for each Fellow will be negotiated on an individual basis with the respective institution.

Those who score above the threshold but not high enough to be selected may be placed on a reserve list at the discretion of the management panel, always in order of ranking. All applicants will be informed of their status.

5.2 Assessment Criteria

Research Proposal

All eligible applications will be evaluated by three independent reviewers and will be given a score from 1 (very poor; superficial addressing of evaluation criteria) to 10 (outstanding in all criteria) in accordance with criteria (Excellence, Impact and Implementation) and sub-criteria outlined in the table below, which are based on the Horizon 2020 Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions criteria.

Then, for each evaluation criterion, a mean average will be determined of the three scores. In the case where the discrepancy between the lowest and highest score is 4 or more, the reviewers will revisit the score and attempt to reach consensus, or if no consensus can be found, a 4th reviewer may be allocated.

Finally, a weighting will be applied as shown, generating an overall score given to one decimal place, between 1 and 10, and the proposals ranked. In case proposals have the equal scores ("ex aequo"), they will be ordered on the priority listed at the end of the table. In cases where this final ordering results in two or more proposals having the cut-off score for inclusion in the next stage of the selection process, both/all concerned proposals will be included in the next stage of the selection.

Excellence	Impact	Implementation
Sub-criteria		
Quality, innovative aspects and credibility of the research objective (including inter/multidisciplinary aspects)	Capacity of the fellow to engage with the Research Centre environment during their fellowship, to enhance their skills, career perspectives and realise the potential impact of the research	Overall coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
Intersectoral aspects of the research objective (academic, industry, societal), specific to the ICT aims of the EDGE programme	Potential of the fellow to establish a leadership role in the field of the proposal, appropriate to their experience level, in Ireland and internationally and in academia and/or industry	Opportunity to enhance the research, via appropriate international collaboration with relevant industry & academic sectors; industrial application examples
Quality of the track record of the applicant relative to the research proposed and the level of Fellowship applied for	Effectiveness of the proposed measures for communication and results dissemination with respect to the field of research. Possibility of the research activity to engage with a variety of academic, industry and societal areas	Appropriateness of the work plan management aspects, including quality management and risk management
	Potential for increased impact of the research and results via industry collaboration	Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure) of the Supervisor's group to the research
Criterion Weighting		
40%	35%	25%
Priority in case of ex aequo		
1	2	3

An overall threshold of 70% will be applicable to the final score, i.e. a score of 7.0/10 must be obtained to possibly proceed to the next stage of the selection process – the interview. All applicants will be informed of their score and summary reviewer comments on their proposal.

Interview

The interview panel will consist of:

1)	**A Centre Director or Deputy Director***
2)	**An Executive Director, Programme Manager or Research Manager***
3)	**A senior scientific member from the relevant Centre or Industry**
4)	**An external expert on the research theme**

* Or their nominee

Each interview panel shall agree (consensus) on a score between 1 (very poor; superficial addressing of criteria) and 5 (excellent in all criteria) and with one decimal. The evaluation criteria, weighting and priority are given below.

A threshold of 70% will be applied, meaning that the result of the interview must be 3.5/5.0 at least in order for the candidate to proceed to final selection.

Criteria	Weighting	Priority in case of ex aequo
The candidate and their proposal: ◦ Scientific knowledge in the field of the research proposal ◦ Critical thinking capability: ability to apply reason to challenges in and beyond their proposal ◦ Assessment of candidate fellow's past experiences including time spent in industry or other activity relevant to their research proposal ◦ Demonstration of coherency between the proposed fellowship and the candidate's development as an independent/mature researcher ◦ Determination of access to necessary resources and infrastructure to implement the research, especially those not available through their host institute	50%	1
Interdisciplinary, inter-sectoral value and application of the proposed research ◦ Interdisciplinary aspects of the research, in the context of the EDGE ICT research community ◦ Fit with the industry partner environment of the host Centre ◦ Potential to engage with the Centre teams to produce definable impacts	40%	2
Presentation and Communication skills	10%	3

Overall score calculation

The final ranking will be based on the peer review and interview scoring with equal weighting. To account for the difference in scales, the final score out of 10 is therefore calculated as:

$$Final\ score = \left(\frac{\text{Peer review score}}{10} + \frac{\text{Interview score}}{5}\right) * 0.5 * 10$$

By definition, from the previous thresholds, applicants must score over 7.0/10 to be eligible for the award.

5.3 Redress Procedure

Applicants who think that their proposal has been unjustly evaluated may submit a request for redress. Requests can be made with regards to evaluation procedures that were followed and/or to the application of the evaluation criteria. Requests with regards to the scientific judgement of reviewers at any stage will not be taken into consideration. Applicants must submit their request within 30 days of being notified of their evaluation outcomes (eligibility review, remote review, interview, selection).

A Redress Template will be available on the EDGE website for this purpose, to be emailed directly to the EDGE Programme Manager (contact details at the end of this document). A Redress Committee will review the submission, and applicants will be informed by e-mail within 15 days if their redress request is accepted. If the redress is accepted, a new evaluation will be conducted, proceeding through peer review, interview and selection as before. In this case, applicants will receive each outcome within five working days of each stage. Redress Committee decisions are final.

6. Ethical Issues

The EDGE Programme is committed to ensure that all research is conducted according to best ethical practice and thus maintain the good name of research in Ireland and Europe.

Applicants must always consider and address any of the following ethics issues, if they arise, in their proposals:

- Humans
- Human cells/tissues
- Personal data
- Animals
- Third countries
- Environment & Health and Safety
- Dual use
- Misuse
- Other ethics issues

Research areas excluded from funding include:

- Research activities aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes
- Research activities intended to modify the genetic heritages or human beings which could make such changes heritable
- Research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purposes of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer
- Research activities involving human embryonic stem cells

All applicants to the EDGE Fellowship Programme are required to complete an Ethics Self-Assessment, which is part of the online application form. This partially addressed the above list of ethics issues. The following questions are asked:

- Does your research involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)?
- Does your research involve the use of human embryos?

- ◦ Does your research involve the use of human foetal tissues / cells?
- ◦ Does your research involve human participants?
- ◦ Does your research involve physical interventions on the study participants?
- ◦ Does your research involve human cells or tissues (other than from Human Embryos/ Foetuses as covered above)?
- ◦ Does your research involve personal data collection and/or processing?
- ◦ Does it involve the collection and/or processing of sensitive personal data
- ◦ (e.g.: health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction)?
- ◦ Does it involve processing of genetic information?
- ◦ Does it involve tracking or observation of participants?
- ◦ Does your research involve further processing of previously collected personal data (secondary use)?
- ◦ Does your research involve animals?

Other issues (Third countries, Environment & Health and Safety, Dual use, Misuse) are complex in nature and not suitable for self-assessment. They may be identified during the evaluation process by any expert reviewer, or during the execution of a project by anyone involved. For more information on ethical issues please refer to the documents listed in Section 9 of this Guide.

7. Employment as an EDGE Fellow

7.1 Contracts

EDGE Fellows will be offered fixed-term or specific purpose Research Fellow employment contracts from the host institution of their Supervisor for the duration of the fellowship. Consequently, all employment contracts will be offered under Irish law. The basic content of the employment contract is in line with the Terms of Employment (Information) Acts 1994–2012, Ireland, which ensures provision of pensions, vacation / maternity / parental and carers leave, accident insurance cover and access to health insurance. Further details are given in the Terms and Conditions document.

With respect to maternity leave, the EDGE programme goes beyond the statutory requirement, ensuring the full Fellowship allowances are received for 26 weeks (see Terms and Conditions for definitions and limitations).

In addition to the general terms and conditions the employment contract will specify the following:

- ◦ The nature of the appointment of the researcher / status (i.e EDGE Fellow Level 1, 2 or 3).
- ◦ The total duration of the Fellowship.
- ◦ Details of the names of the Supervisor(s) with overall responsibility for the project.
- ◦ The salary provided for the Fellow, including any additional payments such as mobility allowance etc.
- ◦ Working hours, vacation and other leave entitlements, such as sickness and maternity leave.
- ◦ Arrangements between the institute and the researcher relating to IP rights, confidentiality and any other policies of the institute.

This employment contract will remain in place during any industry secondments conducted during the Fellowship. In some cases, the Fellow may be required to sign additional agreements (non-disclosure, safety documentation etc.) due to their interaction with an industry partner, in a secondment or otherwise.

7.2 Financial Aspects

The indicative allowances that a Fellow will receive as gross salary for the Fellowships is detailed in the table below. These may vary from institute to institute depending on their treatment of employee and employer deductions, so the above table is for guidance only. Please see the terms and conditions for information on the total award amounts before employer deductions.

Category	€/year		
	EDGE Fellow Level 1 (New Postdoctoral Researcher)	EDGE Fellow Level 2 (Experienced Postdoctoral Researcher)	EDGE Fellow Level 3 (Senior Postdoctoral Researcher)
Living allowance	33 500	45 200	56 600
Mobility allowance*	6 500	6 500	6 500
Family allowance**	5 400	5 400	5 400

Please note that all or part of these allowance received by the Fellow will be liable for taxes or other deductions (see www.revenue.ie).

In addition, the EDGE Fellowship provides generous contributions towards the cost of conducting the research proposal (i.e. consumables, publications, travel, specific workshop or training activities; €13 000 per annum for Fellows under the Advanced Materials and BioEngineering theme, and €7 200 per annum for Fellows in the Digital Content Innovations or Future Networks and Communications themes). Programme-wide management, training and development activities are all provided by EDGE.

* The mobility and family allowances are a constituent of the Fellow's salary in addition to the living allowance, and are is provided to compensate for the cost of the required personal and household relocation of the Fellow and their dependents.

** Family is defined as persons linked to the Fellow by (i) marriage, or (ii) a relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the legislation of the country where this relationship was formalised; or (iii) dependent children who are actually being maintained by the Fellow. Qualification for this allowance is at the time of recruitment, 31st January 2018.

7.3 Other benefits

Fellows will receive all the necessary management and technical support to ensure access to the facilities required to carry out their research. Also, each host institute has administrative and welfare structures in place for the Fellows, such as an accommodation office, IT support and advice and health services.

EDGE fellows will be able to avail flexible working hours and flexible working conditions. While each Fellow will have workspace in their host institution, they may also work from other locations including home as it suits their research, with the consent of their Supervisor. All mandatory meetings will take place between 10 am and 4 pm to avoid the exclusion of fellows with family responsibilities.

Fellows will be given induction and health and safety training in their host institutions, including an induction pack. This will give Fellows information on their rights as employees, employee services and a practical guide to living in Ireland. In Ireland, Fellows can avail of travel schemes such as the Annual Travel Pass and Bike to Work.

8. Relevant Links

European Charter for Researchers

http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/rights/europeanCharter

Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/rights/codeOfConduct

H2020: How to complete your ethics self-assessment

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/ethics/h2020_hi_ethics-self-assess_en.pdf

European Textbook on Ethics in Research

http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/textbook-on-ethicsreport_en.pdf

Toolkit "Gender in EU-funded research"

http://www.yellowwindow.be/genderinresearch/index_downloads.html

Marie Curie researchers and their long-term career development: A comparative study (2014)

http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/pdf/mca/marie_curie_researchers_and_their_long-term_career_development.pdf

Testimonials from Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellows

http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/media-library/testimonials/index_en.htm

9. Contact Details

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