



FC Fellowships - Call for Proposals 2018

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*Fondazione Celiachia
Foundation for Celiac Disease*

FC FELLOWSHIPS CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2018



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1. Foreword

The Fondazione Celiachia (FC) is releasing the '**FC Fellowships - Call for Proposals 2018**' aimed at awarding up to **5 Triennial FC Fellowships** to highly qualified **young graduates and/or post-doctoral fellows** who wish to broaden or acquire experience in **scientific research within the field of celiac disease and dermatitis herpetiformis** in public or private non-profit Italian research institutes/organisations.

Each Triennial FC Fellowship is granted for a total of € 85.000, of which € 75.000 for the triennial gross salary of the FC Fellow (€ 25.000 per year gross salary) and € 10.000 to be used during the Triennial FC Fellowship program exclusively for the purchase of Consumables and Supplies.

The total funding available for the 'FC Fellowships - Call for Proposals 2018' is € 425.000.

The **DEADLINE** for submitting Applications is **11th May 2018 (11 Maggio 2018) at 18:00 o'clock Italian time (ore 18:00)**.

2. Legend and Documents

Legend	Definition
Applicant (Candidate)	The Applicant or Candidate is the young graduate and/or post-doctoral fellow who submits the Application Form to the FC Call for Proposal for obtaining the Triennial FC Fellowship Grant
FC Fellow (Grantee)	The Applicant awarded with the Triennial FC Fellowship Grant at the end of the selection procedure of the Call
Triennial FC Fellowship Grant	The funds allocated by FC to pay the triennial gross salary of the FC Fellow (including taxes and duties) and, when provided by the Call and the Regulation, other costs concerning the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme
Head of the Hosting Lab	The senior investigator who supervises and coordinates both the work and training of the FC Fellow and the course of the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme taking place in his/her laboratory/department
Hosting Institute (Institute)	The public or private non-profit Italian research institute in which the Head of the Hosting Lab is working and the FC Fellow will perform the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme
Legal Representative of the Hosting Institute (or Director of the Department, if duly authorised to sign on the behalf of the Legal	The authorized representative of the Hosting Institute, who will be responsible, along with the FC Fellow and the Head of the Hosting Lab, of all the legal and administrative duties and requirements related to the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme and Grant (Call, Application Form, annexed documents, Regulation and Grant

Representative of the Institute)	Contract). The Legal Representative of the Hosting Institute signs for acceptance the Application Form and the annexed documents (with extension to the Regulation), thus guaranteeing for the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme and Grant to be executed in the Hosting Institute under the conditions/rules/requirements established in the Regulation, the Call and the annexed documents. The Director of the Department (within the Hosting Institute) in which the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme will be carried out can act as the signing Legal Representative if he/she is duly authorised to sign on the behalf of the Legal Representative of the Institute.
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Document	Definition
Regulation FC Fellowships Call for Proposals 2018 (name of the file: 'RegolamentoRegulation_FCFellowships2018')	The document comprises all the rules, policies and guidelines regarding the Funding, the Grant allocation, the requirements and the duties for the FC Fellow, the Head of the Hosting Lab and the Institute, including annual scientific and administrative reports, publications, intellectual property and so on. The Regulation, which comprises and completes the other documents (Call for Proposals, annexed Forms, Grant Agreement etc.), is written in Italian and English.
FC Fellowships - Call for Proposals 2018 (name of the file: 'Call_for_Proposals_FCFellowships2018')	The (present) document sets the aims and objectives of the Call, along with the rules and the requirements governing the eligibility criteria (for the FC Fellow, the Head of the Hosting Lab and the Institute), the Application procedure and the selection process. The FC Fellowships - Call for Proposals 2018 is written in English.
Application Form AND Application Form - Signature Page (name of the files: 'ApplicationForm_FCFellowships2018' AND 'ApplicationForm_SignaturePage_FCFellowships2018') Head of the Hosting Lab Letter Form AND Head of the Hosting Lab Letter Form - Signature Page (name of the files:	The standard Forms to be mandatorily used for the Application to the Call (submission of the Proposal for the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme). The documents, which originate and complete the Regulation and the Call for Proposals, contain all relevant instructions for proper filling in. The Forms are in English and must be completed in English with the exception of specific fields which are indicated.

'HeadHostingLab_LetterForm_FC Fellowships2018' AND
'HeadHostingLab_LetterForm_SignaturePage_FCFellowships2018')

3. Expected Outcomes of the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme

The following goals are considered **key outcomes** of the Triennial FC Fellowship programme, and the **FC Fellow is expected to accomplish them**:

- To run the Research Fellowship Plan as reported in the Application Form (Project Proposal), and yield the expected results
- To improve the Applicant's expertise (including technical skills in terms of methodologies, instruments, organisation of lab space and resources) and knowledge in the field of celiac disease/dermatitis herpetiformis, and his/her track record. In particular, it will be expected that **the FC Fellow will publish at least one or more papers about the Fellowship Project as first Author** in the international Journals (Pubmed quoted)

The above aspects are considered directly relevant to the success of the Triennial FC Fellowship programme. Annual Scientific Progress Reports and the Final Scientific Report will be used by the FC Fellow to describe his/her achievements, and they will represent key evaluation aspects of the Peer Review.

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4. Eligibility Criteria for Applicants

At the time of the fixed deadline for submission of Applications to the present Call, the following eligibility criteria **must be met and maintained**:

1. Applicants must have obtained a **Master's Degree** (equivalent to the Italian *Laurea Magistrale*) or a **Long Single Cycle Degree** (equivalent to an Italian *Laurea a ciclo lungo*, lasting 5 or 6 years) or an **equivalent non-Italian Degree** in scientific disciplines also including Medicine, Biological Sciences, Pharmacy, Chemistry, Agriculture, etc. The obtained degree should formally entitle the Applicant to embark on a doctorate in the country where the degree was attained. Applicants who have also obtained a **PhD** (*Dottorato di Ricerca*) will also be eligible provided that they fulfill the above requirement about the Degree (*Laurea*). Applicants having obtained **ONLY** the Bachelor's Degree (equivalent to the Italian "*Laurea breve*") are **not eligible**
2. For all Applicants, the Master's/Long Single Cycle Degree (*Laurea*) must have been obtained **after 31st December 2011**. In case of more Degrees, **ONLY the FIRST Degree of the required typology obtained by the Applicant (the EARLIER/OLDEST one of the required typology) is the Degree considered by FC for the Applicant's eligibility in the frame of the present FC Call**
3. Applicants **must not** have already been awarded one Triennial FC Fellowship: Former FC Fellow Grantees **cannot** apply to this Call

4. **Applicants must NOT be taking part in any kind of active FC Grants** (including FC Grants which are concluded according to the predicted Grant time-schedule but whose scientific and economic final reports are still under FC evaluation – **not formally closed FC Grants**) under whatever role or title also including multicentre study partners receiving part of the funds of the active FC Grant. **Exceptions** are allowed only in the case of Applicants taking part in active FC Grants as **external collaborators** who **do not receive any FC funds**
5. Only **1 Applicant per research group/laboratory/unit directed by the same Head of the Hosting Lab** can apply to the FC Call 2018
6. Only **1 Proposal (Application Form) per Applicant** can be submitted to the FC Call 2018

Applications from Applicants who do not meet the above requirements will be rejected.

Above requirements shall be maintained during the entire Grant duration.

Applicants can submit an Application to the present Call also when holding other positions, but this condition must be declared in the dedicated Section of the Application Form. However, the FC Fellowship Grant Contract procedure prescribes as mandatory that the selected Applicant renounces and quits all open positions **before** receiving FC funds (Grant allocation) and starting the Triennial FC Fellowship.

5. Eligibility Criteria for the Hosting Institute and the Head of the Hosting Lab

At the time of the fixed deadline for submission of Applications to the present Call, the following eligibility criteria **must be met and maintained**:

1. The Hosting Institution is an **Italian non-profit research organisation** (such as universities, hospitals or other research centres) which, irrespective of its legal status (public or private law bodies), has the primary goal to independently conduct non-profit scientific and/or biomedical research and to disseminate its results. Possible revenues coming from non-profit research activity must be completely reinvested in the non-profit research activities. Where the Hosting Institution also pursues economic activities, the financing, the costs and the revenues of those economic activities must be accounted for separately. Shareholders, partners, companies, members or other individuals that can exert a decisive influence upon the Hosting Institution cannot enjoy any preferential access to the intellectual property of the results generated by the non-profit research activity of the Institution, and they cannot have influence over any aspect (including scientific, financial, organizational, property and/or intellectual issues) of FC granted programmes and corresponding results
2. **Hosting Institutes and the Head of the Hosting Lab must ensure optimal working conditions to the FC Fellow Grantees**: in addition to providing facilities, equipment, reagents, consumables and infrastructure, they are expected to offer adequate training resources and cover expenses for travel, conferences and meetings when these are deemed important for the training and education of the FC Fellow Grantee

3. The **Head of the Hosting Lab is an investigator with proved experience in the field of celiac disease and/or dermatitis herpetiformis**. The Head of the Hosting Lab is required to supervise the work of the FC Fellow Grantee, and to provide training and mentoring activities during the whole Triennial FC Fellowship programme
4. **The Head of the Hosting Lab must NOT be taking part in any kind of active FC Grants** (including FC Grants which are concluded according to the predicted Grant time-schedule but whose scientific and economic final reports are still under FC evaluation – **not formally closed FC Grants**) under whatever role or title also including multicentre study partners receiving part of the funds of the active FC Grant. **Exceptions** are allowed only in the case of Heads of the Hosting Lab taking part in active FC Grants as **external collaborators** who **do not receive any FC funds**

Applications involving Hosting Institutes and/or Heads of the Hosting Lab who do not meet the above requirements will be rejected.

The above requirements shall be maintained during the entire Grant duration.

6. The Project Proposal of the Triennial FC Fellowship Programme

6.1. Duration

According to the triennial duration and the purposes of the FC Fellowship programme, the present Call will consider **only 3-years Project Proposals** which are consistent with **the work of one person (the FC Fellow Grantee)**.

6.2. Research Topics and Areas

Project Proposals must **mandatorily** fulfil BOTH the following requirements:

1. Have a **clear focus** on Celiac Disease and/or Dermatitis Herpetiformis
2. Represent a **biomedical or food technology study** concerning **one** of the **following research areas**:
 - Allergology
 - Anatomic pathology – Histopathology
 - Biochemistry
 - Biology (structural, computational, signalling)
 - Clinical trials
 - Clinics (paediatrics or adult)
 - Dermatology
 - Drug discovery – screening – development
 - Endocrinology
 - Epidemiology – Prevention
 - Genetics - Control of gene expression and epigenetics
 - Gynaecology

- Immunology – Immunobiology
- Infection and inflammation
- Nutrition
- Oncology
- Preclinical study
- Proteomics
- Grains chemistry and biochemistry
- Grain genomics and proteomics
- Grain processing
- Microbiology and grain biotechnology

6.3. FC's HIGH Funding Priority Project Proposals

Project Proposals falling into one of the following definitions will be considered as **high priority research**:

- Proximity to find new pathogenic mechanisms
- Proximity to cure
- Natural history of the pathology by linking different phases of the disease to specific biological/genetic profiles
- Interactions between environmental risk factors, genetic profiles and intermediate biomarkers. This also includes defining harmful components of gluten
- Innovation of clinical methodologies
- Evaluation of the efficacy of diagnostic and therapeutic approaches in clinical practice, in terms of outcome and quality of life. This also includes the improvement of the quality and safety of the gluten-free diet, and innovation of food products
- New therapeutic drugs, procedures or strategies (pilot clinical studies)
- Critical evaluation of last generation drugs (their activity by mechanistic insights)

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6.4. FC's LOW Funding Priority Project Proposals

The following kinds of Project Proposals will be evaluated as **low priority research** and have marginal chances of being funded:

- Studies that are essentially confirmatory in nature or represent marginal 'variations-on-the-theme' of well-established concepts
- Studies contemplating descriptive screenings of molecules and/or phenotypes without mechanistic insights and/or elements of innovative discovery. These include purely descriptive microarray and proteomic profiling studies that are not associated with a strong strategy for clinical application, or the generation of chemical compounds without validating their activities in pharmacological and biological studies
- Generation of reagents and/or optimization of technologies, or creation of services/technological facilities in the absence of a coherent and innovative research plan
- Chemical and/or viral studies not embodied in the framework of mechanistic studies
- Requests for on-going routine collection of current statistics, such as celiac disease registry
- Descriptive epidemiology studies

- Health economics proposals
- Studies that do not contribute to build or expand an original and independent line of research

7. The Selection Procedure

All Applications received by FC will undergo the following steps:

First Step	Administrative Check of Conformity
Second Step	Peer Review Evaluation
Final Step	Approval of the Ranking List by the FC Board of Directors, and funding

7.1. First Step: Administrative Check of Conformity

All Applications undergo a starting administrative check for assessing the compliance with the FC Call guidelines, eligibility criteria and regulation.

- Applications that are found to be **not** consistent with any of the guidelines, eligibility criteria and regulation reported in the present Call and annexed documents (Forms and the *Fellowship FC Regulation/Regolamento FC per le Borse di Studio*) **will be triaged out**
- Only FC holds the responsibility and the authority of making the final decision on the Application's completeness and eligibility. Whatever decision is final and provides for no appeal

Applications that meet all the requirements and accomplish the administrative check successively undergo the Peer Review Evaluation.

All Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the administrative check.

7.2. Second Step: Peer Review Evaluation

Each Application is individually evaluated by three independent international Reviewers:

- The evaluation of each Application by every Reviewer is made upon disclosure of any conflict of interest
- When accepting to evaluate an application, the Reviewers agree that they will maintain the confidentiality on the Application and associated documents they have received

The Reviewers evaluate each Application by a two-phase procedure:

A.	Triaging the Application as Strong or Weak
B.	Score Evaluation of the Application

A. Triageing the Application as Strong or Weak

In the first part of the Peer Review Evaluation, the Reviewers **triage the Application as Strong** (a study that should be triaged in/considered) **or as Weak** (a study that should be triaged out/excluded) on the basis of the following criteria:

Criteria of the Triageing Evaluation
Consistency of the Project Proposal with a triennial duration
Consistency of the Project Proposal with the work of one person. Project Proposals that look like requiring the work of more than one person and/or are not feasible for one person (the Applicant) will be evaluated as Weak Applications
Consistency of the Project Proposal with the Research Topics and Areas selected by the Applicant in the Application Form
FC's High/Low Funding Priorities

Applications evaluated as Weak by at least 2 out of 3 Reviewers **will be triaged OUT**, and they **will NOT enter the Ranking List**.

B. Score Evaluation of the Application

In this second phase of the Peer Review Evaluation, the Reviewer is asked to assess the INTRINSIC SCIENTIFIC VALUE and the FEASIBILITY of each Application.

This assessment is made of two Evaluation Areas. Each Evaluation Area has an overall weight and is in turn composed of different criteria.

The Reviewer assigns a score to each criterion and provides a written comment:

Weighted Evaluation Areas	Scored Criteria
Application Intrinsic Scientific Value (50% weight)	→ Clearness of the Application's purposes → Design, tasks, Research Plan, background, rationale and aims, experimental design, methodologies (preliminary data supporting the working hypothesis, if the case), benefits in using animals (if applicable) → Improvement of basic/clinical comprehension of the disease → Methodological or conceptual innovation, and originality of the Application
Application Feasibility (50% weight)	→ Potential difficulties, pitfalls, caveats and limitations of the Project Proposal, and their impact on the success of the Project Proposal → Applicant's education/publications, track record and professional and research experience (Curriculum Vitae of the Applicant) → The relevance of the competence of the Head of the Hosting Laboratory in terms of expertise in the field, track record, international standing and ability to provide mentoring (Curriculum Vitae of the Head of the Hosting Lab) with respect to the success of the Project Proposal's aims. Also methodologies, instruments, lab space, infrastructures, and resources made available by the Head of the Hosting

	Laboratory, as well as the complementary skills training/mentoring activity offered by the Head of the Hosting Laboratory and the training plan dedicated to the FC Fellow Grantee are evaluated as directly relevant to the success of the Project Proposal's aims → The consistency of the Budget Plan with respect to the design and the aims of the Project Proposal
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For each Application entering the Ranking List, the Overall Score is calculated by averaging the scores assigned by the three Reviewers. Applications are ranked basing on their Overall Scores.

In order to guarantee the best equal treatment of all Applicants, two Ranking Lists will be obtained at the end of the Peer Review Evaluation:

1. The Ranking List of Proposals submitted by graduated Applicants
2. The Ranking List of Proposals submitted by Post-Doc Applicants

7.3. Final Step: Approval of the Ranking Lists by the FC Board of Directors, and funding

Provided that funds are available, FC's Board of Directors meets to decide on the allocation of funds to the most deserving Applications of both Ranking Lists. FC holds the privilege of allocating funds to most deserving Applications of only one of the two Ranking Lists, depending on both funds availability and the results of the Peer Review Evaluation.

At the end of this step, Applicants will be notified by FC with a communication also including the Reviewers' comments. The identity of the Reviewers will not be disclosed. **The decision of FC cannot be appealed.**

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8. Application Submission and Deadline

1. **Documents for applying** to the FC Fellowships - Call for Proposals 2018 are available at the webpage: www.celiachia.it/Fondazione/BandoFellowship2018
2. **Download and complete** the following documents:
 - Application Form (*name of the file: 'ApplicationForm_FCFellowships2018'*)
 - Application Form - Signature Page (*name of the file: 'ApplicationForm_SignaturePage_FCFellowships2018'*)
 - Head of the Hosting Lab Letter Form (*name of the file: 'HeadHostingLab_LetterForm_FCFellowships2018'*)
 - Head of the Hosting Lab Letter Form - Signature Page (*name of the file: 'HeadHostingLab_LetterForm_SignaturePage_FCFellowships2018'*)

Each of the above Forms contain instructions for completion.

3. The **Application Form** and the **Head of the Hosting Lab Letter Form** must be each completed and saved as two distinct PDF FILES:

- DO NOT SCAN the completed Forms, but just SAVE them as PDF files: **SCANNED PDF files and IMAGE files will NOT be accepted**
- **HINT:** in order to check whether your PDF files of the completed Application Form and Head of the Hosting Lab Letter Form are in the requested format, you should be able to paste and copy whatever part of the text of the PDF files
- 4. The **Application Form - Signature Page** and the **Head of the Hosting Lab Letter Form - Signature Page** must be completed, printed, signed **in blue ink** and SCANNED as two distinct PDF COLOUR SCANS.
- 5. **Also include a PDF SCAN/copy of the Degree Certificate** (*Certificato di Laurea*) **mandatorily reporting the following data:** the University, the type of the Degree (Master's Degree - *Laurea Magistrale* - or Long Single Cycle Degree - *Laurea a ciclo lungo* - or the equivalent non-Italian Degree), the official date when the Degree was awarded
- 6. **If applicable, also include a PDF SCAN/copy of the Doctorate Certificate** (*Certificato di Dottorato*) **mandatorily reporting the following data:** the University, the official date when the Doctorate was awarded
- 7. **In case of human and/or animal experimentation** (including human and/or animal biological samples), **also include a copy of the Clearance/Clearances of the Ethical Committee/Institutional Review Board together with a copy of the informed consent form (if applicable).** Each Clearance of the Ethical Committee must **preferentially:**
 - Report **the exact Title** of the Fellowship Project Proposal (as reported in the Application Form)
 - Refer **unequivocally to the Fellowship Project Proposal** (as described in the Application Form)
 - Report **the names of the Head of the Hosting Lab AND the Candidate as researchers that both submitted the Fellowship Project Proposal to the approval of the Ethical Committee AND will carry out the Project Proposal (ALSO** in case the researcher who submits the request for the Clearance is not the Applicant/Head of the Hosting Lab, as in the case of Clinical Studies/collection of samples being performed in authorized medical centers and/or departments different from the one of the Candidate/Head of the Hosting Lab)
 - Report **the date** when the Ethical Committee meeting was held. Clearances **obtained more than 6 months before the launch of the FC Call 2018 (28th March 2018) will NOT be accepted**

Clearances **obtained for other projects/studies** similar or connected to the Project presented to the FC Call 2018 **will be accepted exclusively if annexed to specific Amendment Documents** produced by the Ethical Committee for the Project presented to the FC Call 2018.

Should the Clearance/Clearances of the Ethical Committee not be available yet at the time of the submission of the Application to the present Call, **it is required that a copy of the Clearance SUBMISSION/SUBMISSIONS to the Ethical Committee MUST be included.** Each Clearance SUBMISSION must **mandatorily:**

- Report **the exact Title** of the Fellowship Project Proposal (as reported in the Application Form)

- Refer **unequivocally to the Fellowship Project Proposal** (as described in the Application Form)
- Report **the names of the Head of the Hosting Lab AND the Candidate as researchers that both submitted the Fellowship Project Proposal to the approval of the Ethical Committee AND will carry out the Project Proposal (ALSO** in case the researcher who submits the request for the Clearance is not the Applicant/Head of the Hosting Lab, as in the case of Clinical Studies/collection of samples being performed in authorized medical centers and/or departments different from the one of the Candidate/Head of the Hosting Lab)
- Report **the date** when the Clearance Submission itself was presented to the Ethical Committee. Clearance Submissions performed **more than 6 months before the launch of the FC Call 2018 (28th March 2018) will NOT be accepted**
- Be drawn up on Institutional Paper
- Be signed by the Applicant and the Head of Laboratory

Applications missing Clearances/Amendment Documents or Clearance Submissions will NOT be accepted.

8. **For applying, please send a UNIQUE (N. 1) email communication (defined as the Application of the Candidate) to the following email address: bandifondazione@pec.celiachia.it**

- The bandifondazione@pec.celiachia.it can receive emails from any other kind of addresses, **including non-pec** email addresses
- **Once received**, the Application is considered as **definitive**, thus it cannot be amended/edited/integrated with missing data or documents. However, FC keeps the privilege to ask for clarifications concerning the submitted Application at any time
- The **single** email communication must contain **all the above requested Forms and files as attachments**
- Be careful **not** to produce large files: **all the requested Forms and files taken together should not be larger than 12 MB**. In case all the files taken together are larger than 12 MB, **all the requested Forms and files will be sent as an attached zip folder which must NOT exceed 12 MB**
- Applications and corresponding files that are **submitted in a way** (including sharing web platforms, etc.) **different from the procedure here described will NOT be accepted and will be rejected**
- Applications missing one or more of the requested Forms, documents and files, as well as Applications presenting documents different from the requested Forms, documents and files, or submitting altered versions of the provided Forms, or presenting documents missing one or more of the requested data/information/fields and partially completed or completed in a way different from reported instructions **will be rejected**

9. The **DEADLINE** for submitting Applications is **11th May 2018 (11 Maggio 2018) at 18:00 o'clock Italian time (ore 18:00)**.

- **Applications sent later than the indicated deadline will NOT be accepted and will be rejected**



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9. Contacts and FAQs

For any doubts concerning the present Call, including the guidelines as well as the Application documentation and submission procedure etc., please **send an email** with your query to the FC Scientific Office: fondazione@celiachia.it

FC will provide you a written answer. Questions will be accepted until **10th May 2018 (10 Maggio 2018) at 15:00 o'clock Italian time (ore 15:00)**.

Questions and corresponding Answers will be published on the **FAQ page** if considered of general interest: www.celiachia.it/Fondazione/BandoFellowship2018