

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

Incoming Post-Docs in Sciences, Technology,
Engineering, Materials and Agrobiotechnology
(STEMA)

IPD-STEMA 2023

University of Liege, Research & Innovation Office (RISE)
Place du 20 Août, 7
B-4000 LIEGE
rise@uliege.be

Table of contents

1 ABOUT THE CALL	3
1.1 Summary	3
1.2 Why? What? Who? When?	3
1.2.1 Why?	3
1.2.2 What?	4
1.2.3 Who? (Eligibility of applicants)	4
1.2.4 When?	4
2. IPD-STEMA CALL	5
2.1 Preparation of the application	5
2.1.2 Content and submission of the application	5
2.2. Evaluation and selection	7
2.2.1 Description of the evaluation and selection process	7
2.2.2 Evaluation Criteria	8
2.3 Ethical issues	8
2.4 Getting started	9
2.4.1 Appointment conditions of selected applicants	9
2.4.2 Resigning from the post-doc position	9
2.4.3 Reporting	10
2.4.4 Publications	10
2.4.5 Additional available services	10
2.4.6 LLL training offer	10
2.4.7 Contact person	10
About the programme :	10

Annexes

Annex A - Glossary

Annex B - Ethics check list

Annex C - Publication guidelines for fellows

1 About the call

1.1 SUMMARY

The Sectorial Research Council for Sciences and Technology (SRC-ST) of University of Liège (ULiege) currently provides a fellowship programme that supports young incoming post-docs who want to develop their research at ULiege in Sciences, Technology, Engineering, Agro-Biotech, Materials (STEMA) and related disciplines.

The fellows will be offered a 2-year position with a salary, a running cost budget for research and lifetime skills training opportunities that will enable them to develop their capabilities and independence as research leaders.

The Euraxess Mobility Service Centre of the University of Liege will provide help for mobility and settlement to each fellow as well as to their family.

1.2 Why? What? Who? When?

1.2.1 Why?

IPD-STEMA allows excellent young researchers to develop their career beyond the doctorate, through a project of their own choice, while being integrated into the best teams of ULiege. The post-doc will thus acquire the skills that a research leader is intended to have: excellence in research, experience leading project, management and leadership capacities, academic independence, etc.

IPD-STEMA offers attractive working conditions for researchers. The conditions under which researchers are welcomed include remuneration with social security coverage¹ plus a research budget of 5,000 EUR/year. The researcher has a complete freedom to choose their host research unit according to their academic field or research area.

ULiege wishes to speed up the implementation of the principles described in HRS4R². By aligning its practices with those of the H2020-MSCA-programme, ULiege contributes to the ERA Priority 3 by improving researchers working conditions and developing mobility across Europe and from the rest of the world to Europe, thus facilitating the circulation of researchers, of knowledge and of technologies.

¹ The remuneration offered in this programme must respect the Belgian conditions for being awarded what is called 'bourse de post-doctorat' (conditions on mobility, freedom in research and previous work).

² https://www.recherche.uliege.be/cms/c_9263814/en

1.2.2 What?

ULiege **IPD-STEMA** fellowships rely on a bottom-up approach: Applicants define their own research project in cooperation with their host unit, so that they can develop a win-win cooperation in terms of science, excellence and career development. All sciences and technical research areas are accepted.

The duration of the fellowship is 24 months. The total number of fellowships offered in 2023 is 7.

1.2.3 Who? (Eligibility of applicants)

The current **IPD-STEMA** programme is entirely dedicated to newly graduated postdocs who meet the conditions defined by the SRC-ST:

- PhD obtained after 1 October 2017 or be in a position to obtain his/ her doctoral degree before 15 September 2023. Following the conferral of the doctoral degree, a maximum 2 years extension shall be granted in increments of 1 year per child following a maternity leave (for female applicants only) or adoption leave (for both male and female applicants);
- meet the conditions for being allocated a "foreign post-doctoral grant" in Belgium:
 - not have lived or worked in their main job in Belgium for more than 24 months in the past 3 years before the start of the **IPD-STEMA** fellowship,
 - develop during the Post-Doc, full-time unconstrained research at ULiege and not perform any other paid work for ULiege or a third party (i.e. company);
- not have worked at ULiege for more than 12 months before the start of the fellowship, as foreign post-doctoral grantee or post-doctoral employee;
- only one applicant per host researcher (in case 2 applicants refer to the same host-researcher, both applications will be rejected); the host must be affiliated to the Sectorial Research Council in Science and Techniques. The host who is currently promoter of a post-doc from the previous call (IPD-STEMA 2022) is not eligible.

1.2.4 When?

The deadline for the submission of the application form for the IPD-STEMA 2021 call is **Friday March 10th, 2023 23:59 Brussels Time**. The application form will not be accessible anymore after this deadline. The reference letters should be sent by the referees before **Wednesday March 15th, 2023, 23:59 Brussels Time**.

The result of the selection will be communicated to the applicant and to ULiege host researcher on May 31st, 2023 at the latest. Applicants placed on reserve list will be informed about the vacancy before September 1st, 2023.

The fellowship position must start between 01/07/2023 and 31/12/2023.

2. IPD-STEMA Call

2.1 Preparation of the application

2.1.2 Content and submission of the application:

The application and all required annexes must be submitted online by the post-doc applicant using the following link: <https://my.uliege.be/stema2023>. Only full applications will be accepted.

The online application form includes:

- a summary of the post-doctoral research proposal;
- all (8) obligatory annexes (see below) uploaded in ONLY ONE (1) unprotected PDF file
- name of a host research, permanent ULiege research staff member³ who supports the applicant and agrees to host him/her if selected for funding. Only one applicant is accepted per host.
- name of two international experts whose recommendations can be requested regarding the application.

For the preparation of your application, you may want to use an offline form available via the following link : <https://www.recherche.uliege.be/stema23-offline-applform>

This form is only intended to help you prepare your file. Only applications submitted via the online form will be considered.

The applicant must make sure that :

- no other application will be supported by their host,
- their host is not actually promoter of a post-doc position granted in the previous call (IPD-STEMA 2022),
- no links between the suggested experts and themselves exist, in order to guarantee objectivity and independence and avoid any conflict of interest.

An e-mail is sent to the applicant when the application is completed. If not, the applicant has to verify their submission and/or to contact Research & Innovation officers (list p.10, §2.4.7).

³ All members of the academic or scientific staff with a permanent contract on the ordinary budget of the university, professors in probatory period and FNRS researchers with permanent contracts. Research logisticians are not eligible for being hosts.

Required annexes:**Annex I - Research project proposal**

Description of research project may not exceed 10,000 characters, font (letter size) 11. Figures can be added on one (and only one) separate sheet. A bibliography is non mandatory but strongly recommended; it will not be counted amongst the max. character limit.

Annex II - Requested budget

A budget of max. 5,000 EUR/year for running cost can be requested. A provisional expenses table has to be filled. It will be part of the evaluation. Expenses must be directly linked to the project and can cover costs linked to research material and consumables, participation to conferences, fees for publication training and career development,

Annex III - Ethics check-list

The ethics check-list in Annex B to this document must be filled and joined.

Annex IV - Full CV including a list of publications

Full CV (max. 2 pages) and with a list of publications in which the articles published as the first (co)-author, or last (co)-author are highlighted.

Annex V - Motivation letter

The motivation letter must be recent (<3 months), dated and signed. It must not exceed ONE page and should provide a brief explanation of the nature of previous stay(s) at ULiege if any.

Annex VI - Letter of recommendation from the ULiege host researcher

A recent (<1 month), signed and dated letter of recommendation from the ULiege host-researcher. This letter cannot exceed ONE page and should be submitted using the following link : <https://my.uliege.be/stema2023-upload>. The name this annex must contain "STEMA23 - name of applicant".

Annex VII - Letter of recommendation from an external expert

A recent (<3 months), signed and dated letter of recommendation from an academic (max. ONE page) with whom the applicant previously worked or with whom they published (PhD thesis supervisor, head of a research unit, etc.). This person cannot be one of the international experts you listed in the "international expert" section of this form. The letter should be submitted using the following link : <https://my.uliege.be/stema2023-upload>. The name this annex must contain "STEMA23 - name of applicant".

Annex VIII - PhD diploma

Copy of the PhD diploma or certificate of status and expected graduation date from the doctoral school where you are currently preparing your thesis. These documents should provide comprehensive information regarding the degree obtained (or to be obtained) and must be translated if the document is not written in English or French.

2.2. Evaluation and selection

2.2.1 Description of the evaluation and selection process

4 steps can be distinguished regarding the process:

STEP 1 - Eligibility and application check – Online submission of the application by the applicant, in English only. After the closure of the call, the eligibility of applicants is checked. Applicants, whose application is considered as not eligible, will be informed and invited to provide arguments against the decision if any.

STEP 2 - Evaluation– 3 experts from the ULiege scientific community will be appointed by the SRC-ST for evaluating each application (see below for the evaluation criteria and scores), according to their expertise in the field of the applicant's research.

STEP 3 - Overall ranking and selection - One member of the SRC-ST will aggregate the 3 reports in one, give the mean scores and present the application to the members of the Sectorial Research Council for Science and Technology. Each application will be discussed. Minor modifications can be added to the report for clarification, following the members' debates.

Awarding of marks:

On the basis of the scores, the Sector Research Councils proceed then to the final overall ranking in categories:

A: 'Priority List': the applicant is offered funding. They must confirm their stay within 15 working days.

B: 'Reserve List': the applicant's proposal is of high quality but sufficient funds are not available. This list is ranked in order. In case an applicant ranked "A" refuses an offer, the first applicant placed on list B will be informed about the vacancy and thus will have the opportunity to accept. They must confirm their stay within 15 working days.

C: 'Reject list': the applicant's proposal is not of sufficient quality to be funded.

Each applicant will receive a feedback report. Applicants in category A or B will receive their ranking number; applicants in category C aren't ranked.

STEP 4 - Feedback to the applicant - Applicants as well as host units are informed of the decision (letter and feedback report).

Each successful applicant must confirm their acceptance for the offered fellowship and sign an agreement with ULiege within 15 working days. Start dates for funded post-doc applications: between 01/07 and 31/12 of the year of the funding decision.

2.2.2 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria are:

(1) Quality of the applicant (CV, publications). The first criterion especially focalises on the applicant's qualification, career and capabilities. Overall weight: 50%.

(2) Quality of the research project and its feasibility in the proposed time frame. The intrinsic quality of the project as well as the applicants' capacity to develop and manage the research project is considered. Adequacy of the required research budget is taken into account as well as the ethical issues the applicant has to deal with. Consideration of ethical issues is mandatory. Overall weight: 25%.

(3) Research Environment. Compatibility of the research project with the research currently undertaken in the host unit (availability of necessary resources, equipment and material). Overall weight: 25%.

For each criterion, a mark in the range 0 to 5 is given, with no decimal.

Note	Explanation
1	Insufficient. The application meets the evaluation criterion in a superficial way and information is missing.
2	Weak. The application shows many weaknesses related to the criterion in question.
3	Good. The application broadly satisfies the criterion, but raises some points for discussion here and there.
4	Very Good. The application satisfies the criterion in an appropriate way, even if some improvements remain possible.
5	Excellent. The application fully meets all the relevant aspects of the criterion in question.

2.3 ETHICAL ISSUES

Within this programme, ethical issues are to be considered for all projects.

The ethics issues check-list (in **Annex B** to this document) is part of the application form and the evaluation and **MUST** be completed.

1 – If any answer is “YES”, applicants are asked to describe in an additional document how the ethical requirements set out will be fulfilled.

2 – During the evaluation process, the lead evaluator will check any ethical issues (Ethics check list) raised by a proposal with reference to the rules set out in European and in Belgian laws.

3 - If any ethical issue is raised, the head of the applicants' host unit is asked to produce a report which includes a list of the pertinent ethical issues and their recommendations regarding the way

the issues are to be handled by the applicant. They may indicate the need to organise a follow up at a later stage of the project. They may also suggest appropriate training activities to be added to the fellow's personal-, professional- and career development plan.

4 - The applicants are informed of the outcome of the ethical review through the feedback report given at the end of the evaluation process.

2.4 Getting started

2.4.1 Appointment conditions of selected applicants

ULiege is awarded "HR Excellence in Research" by the EU Commission since January 2011 and offers fellowships with social security and career development facilities.

The average net wage provided to grantees is approximately €2,900 per month, depending of family charges. The social coverage is a full coverage including health care, professional insurances, family allowances. The fellows will be ULiege employees and will benefit of all existing ULiege facilities: insurances, administrative support and access to the Euraxess Service Center and its network.

During the fellowship, the financial monitoring will be performed by the Research & Innovation Office (RISE) to ensure that the actual expenses correspond to the budget breakdown as described in the application.

The host unit and the university provide additional support to the fellow:

- ULiege email address and Internet facilities, with access to a computer;
- Access to the ULiege library network and free access to its databases⁴;
- Introduction to and participation in the seminars run by research teams;
- Costs related to access to training, Intellectual Property Rights related services, patenting;
- Recognition of intellectual property rights identical to those of ULiege researchers⁵.

2.4.2 Resigning from the post-doc position

Because of personal, family or professional reasons, situations might occur in which the fellow is obliged to resign from his or her post-doc positions. Any alteration of the contract implies the prior consent of the head of the host unit. The fellow informs the Research & Innovation Office (RISE) and the ULiege Human Resources Administration of their intention to resign from the position at the latest by the end of the month that precedes the desired resignation date. The fellow immediately loses access to the allocated budget. The fellow cannot be replaced.

⁴ <https://lib.uliege.be/>

⁵ https://www.recherche.uliege.be/cms/c_9038039/en/transfer-of-knowledge

2.4.3 Reporting

At the end of the fellowship, the fellows must submit a research report to the Sectorial Research Council. This report contains 3 sections: a section related to the research and publications, a section dedicated to travel and mobility outside of the host institution and, if applicable, a section dedicated to knowledge transfer during the fellowship. If applicable, a report describing ethical issues will be submitted with the feedback questionnaire (satisfaction survey) the aim of which is to assess the programme.

Submission deadline for the final report: at the latest 1 month after the end of the fellowship.

2.4.4 Publications

Every publication released or event held within the framework of the applicant's research stay at ULiege should be clearly referring to the author as being a beneficiary of the IPD-STEMA fellowship supported by the Special Funds for Research.

The fellow is required to abide by the ULiege policy guidelines regarding the way to refer to ULiege and the programme in publications or communications (**Annexe C** of this document).

All publications related to IPD STEMA fellowships are to be uploaded on the ULiege repository : orbi.uliege.be. It is mandatory by law (FWB decree of May 2018).

2.4.5 Additional available services

During her or his stay at the ULiege, the fellow can benefit from services that will enable him/her to make the most of their stay on an academic, interpersonal and cultural level. The costs of these services are met by the host institution or research unit. This includes Lifelong Learning, Social integration actions, Administrative support and Psycho-socio-medical support.

2.4.6 LLL training offer

Fellows may benefit from the LLL offer that ULiege provides. They may also participate in external traineeships that they consider being worthwhile to participate in. External trainings expenses should be mentioned in the fellow's provisional budget that is required in the application. The Research & Innovation Office (RISE) can help to find trainers or training sessions in Belgium.

2.4.7 Contact person

About the programme :

M. Denys Jeandrain, ULiege Research & Innovation Office (RISE)

Tél: +32 4 366 5231 - denys.jeandrain@uliege.be

Technical help for the online application :

Mrs. Véronique Dubuy, ULiege Research & Innovation Office (RISE)

veronique.dubuy@uliege.be

ANNEX A

Glossary

Applicant	The applicant is a person who meets the conditions of applying for the programme. An applicant becomes a <i>fellow</i> once his or her application was accepted.
Host researcher	The host researcher is a member of the <i>host (research) unit</i> which can be either a research laboratory or a ULiege faculty who will support the researcher during the preparation of the application and during the whole duration of the fellowship. They must be affiliated to the Sectorial Research Council in Science and Techniques. They are a permanent member of ULiege or from the FNRS. The host researcher cannot support more than one IPD-STEMA application and has to choose between the applicants before submission. In case 2 applicants refer to the same host-researcher, both applications will be rejected.
Evaluator/expert	3 experts from ULiege will be appointed for reviewing each application. Internal experts are experienced researchers chosen by the Sectorial Research Council amongst the scientific community according to their expertise in the field of the applicant's research. One member of the Council will report on the application (writes the application report, evaluates ethical issues, investigates if potential conflicts occur, etc.).

ANNEX B Ethics check list	YES/ NO
Human participants	
Does the research involve human participants? If YES,	
- Does the proposal involve volunteers for social or human sciences research?	
- Does the proposal involve persons unable to give informed consent?	
- Does the proposal involve vulnerable individuals or groups	
- Does the proposal involve children/minors	
- Does the proposal involve patients?	
- Does the proposal involve adult healthy volunteers for medical studies?	
Does the research involve physical interventions on the study participants? If YES,	
- Does it involve invasive techniques (eg collection of cells or tissues, surgical or medical interventions, invasive study of the brain, TMS? ...)	
- Does it involve collection of biological samples?	
Human Cells/Tissues/Embryonic Stem Cells	
Does the research involve Embryonic Stem Cells (hESCs)? If YES,	
- Does they be directly derived from embryos within this project?	
- Are they previously established cells lines?	
Does the research involve the use of human embryos?	
Does the research involve the use of human foetal tissues/cells? If YES,	
- Does they be directly derived from embryos within this project?	
- Are they previously established cells lines?	
Does the proposal involve Human Foetal Tissue/Cells other than hESCs? If YES,	
- Are they available commercially?	
- Are they obtained within this project?	
- Are they obtained within another project?	
- Are they deposit in a biobank?	

Protection of personal data	
<p>Does the research involve personal data collection and/or processing</p> <p><i>It should be noted that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>“Personal data” can be defined as identifiers: any information that could, in any way, lead to the specific identification of one unique person, such as name, social security numbers, date of birth, address, mails IPs etc</i> - <i>Any data that you are using should be taken into account, regardless of the method by which they are/were collected: for example, through interviews, questionnaires, direct online retrieval etc.</i> - <i>Processing should be understood to not only include data usage, but also merging, transformation, transfer and, more generally, as all actions using data for research purposes.</i> <p>If YES,</p>	
- Does the 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?	
<p>Does the research involve further processing of previously collected personal data (secondary use)?</p> <p>If YES,</p>	
- Are you planning to collect any data directly but rather to use pre-existing other data or sources and/or does your research involve further processing of previously collected data?	
- Does your research involve merging existing data sets?	
- Are you planning to share data with non-EU member states?	
Research on Animals	
<p>Does the research involve animals?</p> <p>If YES,</p>	
- Are they invertebrates or live cephalopods?	
- Are they non-human primates (NHP)?	
- Are they genetically modified?	
- Are they cloned farm animals?	
- Are they endangered species?	
Research Involving Developing Countries	
Does your research involve third countries?	
Do you plan to use local resources (e.g. animal and/or human tissue samples, genetic material, live animals, human remains, materials of historical value, endangered fauna or flora samples, etc.)?	
Do you plan to import any material, including personal data, from non EU/third countries into the EU?	
Do you plan to export any material, including personal data, from the EU to third/non-EU countries?	
If your research involves low and/or lower-middle income countries, are any benefit-sharing actions planned?	
Could the situation in the country put the individuals taking part in the research at risk?	

Environmental protection and safety	
Does your research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to the environment, animals or plants?	
Does your research deal with endangered fauna and/or flora /protected areas?	
Does your research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to humans, including research staff?	
Does your research involve the use of elements that may cause harm to humans, including research staff? If YES,	
- Does your research involve harmful biological agents?	
- Does your research involve harmful chemical and explosive agents?	
- Does your research involve harmful radioactive agents?	
- Does your research involve other harmful materials or equipment, e.g. high-powered laser systems?	
Dual use	
Does your research have the potential for military applications? If YES,	
- Does your research have an exclusive civilian application focus?	
- Will your research use or produce goods or information that will require export licenses in accordance with legislation on dual use items?	
- Does your research affect current standards in military ethics – e.g., global ban on weapons of mass destruction, issues of proportionality, discrimination of combatants and accountability in drone and autonomous robotics developments, incendiary or laser weapons?	
Misuse	
Does your research have the potential for malevolent/criminal/terrorist abuse? If YES,	
- Does your research involve information on/or the use of biological-, chemical-, nuclear/radiological-security sensitive materials and explosives, and means of their delivery?	
- Does your research involve the development of technologies or the creation of information that could have severe negative impacts on human rights standards (e.g. privacy, stigmatization, discrimination), if misapplied?	
- Does your research have the potential for terrorist or criminal abuse e.g. infrastructural vulnerability studies, cybersecurity related research?	
Other ethics issues	
Are there any other ethics issues that should be taken into consideration? E.g. issues linked to cyber security, artificial intelligence, Implants, ... Please specify.	

ULiege publication guidelines for fellows

All publications related to IPD STEMA fellowships are to be uploaded on the ULiege repository: orbi.uliege.be. It is mandatory by law (FWB decree of May 2018).

Moreover, it is absolutely necessary for the ULiege academic staff members to be clear about their affiliation while communicating.

Please follow the following recommendation when you sign an article or when you give a communication in any public event:

- Use "University of Liege (ULiege) – name of the department/faculty/ research unit"
- Do not use the name of the university in French if not required and do not use accents
- Examples :
 - University of Liege (ULiege), Center for Protein Engineering
 - University of Liege (ULiege), Chemical Engineering
 - University of Liege (ULiege), Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech, Landscape and Biodiversity Unit
- For publications in French AND whenever the publishers do not agree with English references, use : "Université de Liège (ULiege) – nom du département/de la faculté/ nom de l'unité de recherche

During or after the duration of the grant, please mention the ULiege affiliation for any publication related to your work at ULiege :

- Use "University of Liege (ULiege) – name of the department /fac/research unit as said above
- Add "This research was supported by the University of Liege under Special Funds for Research, IPD-STEMA Programme"
- Use the ULiege logos on your slides and/or (un)published papers
- In French : "Cette recherche a été soutenue financièrement par l'Université de Liège dans le cadre des Fonds spéciaux pour la recherche, Programme IPD-STEMA »

If the article refers to your previous work, please use your current affiliation and add a note with your past affiliation.