



# Guidelines for the ETH Zurich Doc.Mobility Fellowship programme

October 2022

[Overview](#)  
[Funding](#)  
[Submission](#)  
[Evaluation](#)  
[Post-grant procedures](#)

## Overview

The ETH Zurich Doc.Mobility Fellowship programme (ETH Doc.Mobility) is for doctoral students at ETH Zurich who wish to carry out part of their doctoral research at a research institution abroad. The programme is intended to enhance the scientific profile of doctoral students by giving them the opportunity to gain international working experience and widen their scientific portfolio and network. It will support research or training related to the fellows' doctoral project. The fellowship is available for doctoral researchers in all disciplines represented at ETH Zurich.

Applications must be written and submitted by the candidate and supported by the host professor and the doctoral supervisor. There must be a convincing link and a clear benefit to the doctoral project at ETH Zurich.

The fixed duration of an ETH Doc.Mobility Fellowship is six months, which can be split into 2 x 3 months in justified cases. Shorter or longer stays abroad are not funded by this fellowship. Justifications to split the stay can include seasonal field work, scientific reasons, or family commitments.

The fellowship is competitive with only a limited number of fellowships available each year. The current fellowship programme (2021-2024) is jointly funded by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and the ETH Zurich.

## Funding

The ETH Doc.Mobility Fellowship offers up to CHF 20,000 to cover expenses specified in the budget. Eligible cost categories are increased living costs (fixed lump sum), travel (from Zurich to the host city abroad and back in economy class), child support, research expenses, conference participation, and matriculation fees (if not waived). Some of the cost categories have upper limits (see FAQ). The allocated funding is only for expenses during the fellowship.

# Submission

## Eligibility criteria

Applicants must be enrolled as doctoral students and employed at ETH Zurich at the time of the submission deadline and continue to do so during their ETH Doc.Mobility stay abroad. An existing doctoral employment at ETH Zurich can therefore not be suspended for the duration of the fellowship. Applicants must receive their ETH Zurich salary during their stay abroad.

Alternatively, applicants who are enrolled at ETH Zurich but are employed at one of the following ETH Domain Institutions: Eawag, WSL, Empa and PSI, or are employed at one of the following joint ETH/UZH institutions: Institute of Neuroinformatics (INI) or Institute for Biomedical Engineering (IBT), are also eligible. They must be employed at these institutions at the time of the submission deadline and continue to do so during their ETH Doc.Mobility stay abroad. Applicants in this category have to contact the Grants Office before application to confirm eligibility.

Students whose salary is funded by the SNSF are not eligible.

Research visits abroad to an ETH Zurich partner institution as part of a “Cotutelle de these” or joined doctoral programme project are not funded. A fellow cannot stay at a host institution where they have previously studied or worked. Stays abroad in the country of origin of the Fellow are not eligible. Exceptions may be granted on request, generally for scientific reasons only. The host institution must be a not-for-profit organisation.

There is a duty to report other grant applications or funding streams for the same purpose. This fellowship does not cover items that are already funded by other grants or funding streams.

The fellowship can begin at the earliest after the receipt of the decision letter (which may take up to two months after the submission deadline) and is not awarded retrospectively. The full duration of the fellowship must be completed prior to the doctoral examination.

It is possible to resubmit an ETH Zurich Doc.Mobility Fellowship application following a rejection once. The ETH Doc.Mobility Fellowship can only be awarded once.

Applications not complying with the eligibility criteria will be rejected on formal grounds.

## Application

Applications must be submitted directly by the candidate using the online web form (except the letter of support from the doctoral supervisor at ETH Zurich, which the supervisor must send to the Grants Office by e-mail). The application must include the following:

1. The **application document** (using the specific ETH Doc.Mobility [template](#)) that includes:
  - A description of the scope of the research stay abroad and how it is of relevance and of benefit to the doctoral project including a summary of the research plan (3pp max.).
  - If applicable, a justification for the split of the stay abroad into 2 x 3 months.
  - An itemised, tabular budget and a justification for the requested funding.
  - A motivational statement.
  - A CV of the candidate including a publication list. It is important that all dates **at least include month and year** (2pp max.).
  - A confirmation that the fellow will adhere to any ethical issues and research requiring authorisation or notification as per ETH Zurich and host guidelines.

**2. An invitation letter from the host** at the institution abroad, which must include

- Comments on the merit of the proposed research project/technique to be acquired.
- Confirmation that the host/host institution provides supervision/guidance and access to the required infrastructure as per research proposal.
- Confirmation that the proposed research project will adhere to any local ethics, research authorisation or notification requirements (if applicable).
- Confirmation that the research stay will last six months.

A signed letter (PDF) from the host must be uploaded by the applicant on the web with the application.

**3. A letter of support** from the doctoral supervisor at ETH Zurich which must include:

- Comments on the candidate's scientific track record/aptitude to perform the planned research or learn a new technique/method.
- Comments on the merit of the proposed research or techniques to be learned abroad and how it relates and benefits the doctoral project at ETH Zurich.
- Confirmation that the project will adhere to any ethics, research authorisation or notification requirements as per guideline from ETH Zurich and abroad (if applicable).
- Confirmation that the employment at ETH Zurich or the other eligible ETH Domain and associated institutions will continue for the duration of the research project abroad.

The support letter must be emailed directly by the ETH Zurich supervisor to the Grants Office to the following address: [ethdocmobility@sl.ethz.ch](mailto:ethdocmobility@sl.ethz.ch) by the submission deadline.

## Deadlines

There are two ETH Doc.Mobility Fellowship submission deadlines per year, 1 March and 1 September at 17:00 Swiss local time. Applications must be submitted electronically using the online web form. All required documents must be submitted by the deadline. This includes the support letter to be emailed directly by the ETH supervisor to the Grants Office.

## Evaluation

### Evaluation procedure

ETH Doc.Mob Fellowship applications will be formally checked by the Grants Office and further evaluated by the ETH Zurich Research Commission. The evaluation is based on the application documents. Applicants will be informed about the decision within two months after the submission deadline. The decisions are final.

### Evaluation criteria

Applications will be assessed against criteria addressing

- the scientific track record and personal aptitude of the applicant;
- the scientific quality of the planned research and if applicable the appropriateness of technique/method/skills to be learned/developed abroad;
- the relevance and overall benefit to the doctoral research project;
- the choice of host institution and the host institutional support.

In line with DORA,<sup>[1]</sup> achievements will be assessed on the base of qualitative evaluations of a diverse range of research outputs and activities.

## Post-grant procedures

### Start of fellowship

ETH Doc.Mobility Fellows are expected to start their fellowship at the latest twelve months after the submission deadline. If they cannot adhere to this date, approval for a later start must be requested from the Grants Office. ETH Doc.Mobility Fellowships always start on the first day of the month.

### During the fellowship

The awarded monthly living cost and child support allowances are paid as a top up to the ETH Zurich doctoral salary on a monthly basis starting in the first month of the fellowship. The other awarded funds must be claimed with receipts. Fellows can only claim Doc. Mobility expenses up to the maximum amounts granted and in the funding categories as they are listed and confirmed in the decision letter. The awarded Doc.Mobility funds can only be used during the fellowship abroad.

For Doc.Mobility Fellows employed at the eligible ETH Domain or UZH institutions, the financial procedure will be different as the one described above. More information will be provided after the fellowship has been awarded.

### After the fellowship: Research and Financial Reporting Requirements

The ETH Doc.Mobility Fellows must submit a research and financial summary report (max. 4pp) to the [Grants Office](#) within six weeks after completion of their fellowship (see FAQ for more information).

The expense claims must be submitted no later than six weeks after the fellowship. Any unused funds cannot be used after the fellowship. More information will be provided after the fellowship has been awarded.

### Publications

The fellowship must be mentioned in publications, e.g., in the form “This work was supported by an ETH Zurich Doc.Mobility Fellowship”.

Detlef Günther  
Vice President for Research, ETH Zurich

Uwe Sauer  
President of the ETH Zurich Research Commission

---

<sup>[1]</sup> The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, <https://sfdora.org/>