



EUROPEAN
HEMATOLOGY
ASSOCIATION

EHA RESEARCH GRANTS PROCESS

STEP BY STEP GUIDE

For applying for an EHA Research Grant

SEPTEMBER 1, 2023



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Guidelines for the EHA Research Grant application

This document will guide you through every step of the process from applying to administering the EHA Research Grant. If you have any questions, please contact the Grants Manager at

EHA-Grants@ecorys.com.

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DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION:

31 October 2023, 12:00pm (noon) – CET

Keep in mind that once you register, it may take **up to two business days before you get access** to the system. Registrations are approved Monday to Friday between 08:00 -18:00 CET/CEST. You are advised to plan accordingly as delays occasioned by late registration will not exempt you from the deadline.

1. Introduction

EHA Research Grants support talented early career researchers in advancing their career, e.g., towards becoming the leader of a research group. The research must be lab-based: basic or translational research in the field of hematology.

If you have ambition for advancing your career and you have the full support of your department and institute, please read further to understand what you can expect as an applicant and subsequently as a winner of an EHA Research Grant.

EHA's Fellowships & Grants Committee oversees the selection of the winners, with the help of external reviewers and the support of the EHA office. For any questions regarding the funding scheme or the process, please contact the Talent Accelerator department at EHA at EHA-Grants@ecorys.com.

2. Which category of EHA Research Grants is for me?

Junior Research Grant: €50.000, - per year, for 3 years

For researchers doing basic research within 4 years of their PhD graduation. The month of graduation must be less than 4 years before the closing date of the application. Exceptions must be justified.

Advanced Research Grant: €80.000, - per year, for 3 years

For researchers doing basic research 4-8 years after their PhD graduation. This is the time interval between the month of graduation and the closing date of the application. Exceptions must be justified.

Physician Scientists' Research Grant: €80.000, - per year, for 3 years

For physician scientists who are involved in patient care and:

- Are MD or equivalent
- Are within 8 years after PhD graduation **OR** MD graduation **OR** hematology training (or equivalent), whatever comes last at the closing date of the application. Exceptions must be justified.
- Have a proven track record in research by publications
- Must have at least 50% protected time for performing the research project, to be justified in the letter of support by the Head of Department where the research will be performed.
- It is highly preferred that the topic of research is related to the specialty in the clinic. (e.g., LAB: developing a mouse model in MPN, CLINIC: treating MPN)
- MDs enrolled in a PhD program (or equivalent) are eligible to apply for this grant, if PhD completion is set to take place before the start of the EHA grant period. Please contact the grants office to confirm your eligibility.

IMPORTANT: If your project is in hemoglobinopathies, be sure to select the [Topic-in-Focus](#) version of your category! EHA has earmarked a grant for research in [Hemoglobinopathies](#), with a focus on Sickle Cell Disease.

EXTENDING THE REACH OF RESEARCH GRANTS

The main focus for EHA Grants has been to support talented researchers across Europe . To extend the reach of EHA Research Grants, EHA has earmarked up to 2 grants across all categories for those

researchers based in one of the following countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Türkiye, Ukraine.

EHA has a policy regarding life events and eligibility:

- For each child/pregnancy, a mother can add 18 months to the time since graduation and a father can add 3 months.
- Other life events, e.g., military service, disease or lab closure can also extend the period of eligibility and must be justified.

EHA's policy on double awarding

EHA is guided by the concept of supporting as many young investigators/clinicians as possible in their career development. Therefore, double awarding is not allowed. Winning an award excludes the award winner from winning another award while receiving the first. Once the award has ended, you can apply for other opportunities.

If you have received an EHA Mentoring program award, you cannot apply for another EHA mentoring program within 2 years of completion (including TRTH). This allows the impact of the mentorship on your research project (preclinical or clinical) to show. You should still be working on making that a success during the 2-year interval.

Should you be the current recipient of a Research Grant, the following applies:

For the duration of your Research Grant project, you cannot apply for a travel grant for the EHA congress, as your budget for the grant already includes travel, registration and accommodation for the EHA congress. Nor can you apply for a mentoring program during the grant period.

In the course of the year, several calls will open for different opportunities.

The Bite-size Master class is excluded from this policy.

How can an EHA Research Grant be used?

- Personnel costs (applicant or other research staff, such as a post doc or research assistant, bioinformatician etc that are working directly on the project);
- Lab Consumables;
- Small equipment (if properly justified);
- Other miscellaneous expenses such as publication of the project results;
- Mandatory: Max €2000 for attendance of EHA congress for each year of your grant during the project year (includes travel, registration, accommodation).
- Mandatory: Max € 2000 for final project financial audit costs.

What is not supported ?

- Overhead costs
- Excessive travel costs, other than to the EHA Congress as indicated above.

If the amount is not sufficient to fully cover all the project the expenses, details must be shared for how the other expenses are to be covered.
 The maximum amount of funding requested must be indicated in the budget and a detailed justification provided.
 All expenditures must be documented with original receipts, vouchers, or invoices.

3. Practical: What to prepare and what to expect

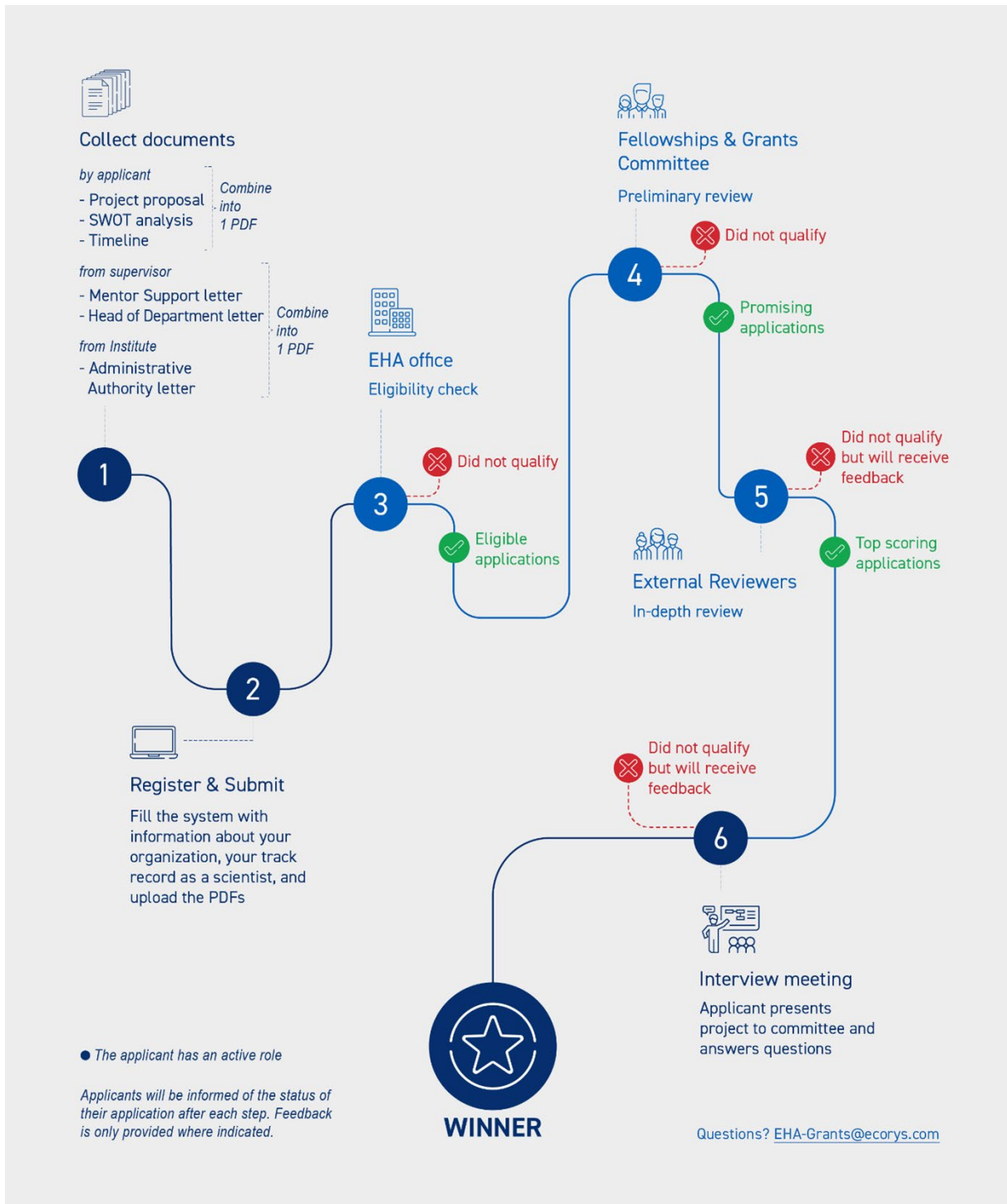


Illustration of the review and selection process

Applicants will be informed of the status of their application after every step. Keep in mind that once

you register, it may take up to two business days before you get access to the system. You are advised to plan accordingly as delays occasioned by late registration will not exempt you from the deadline.

Before you start

Register in the EHA Portal (Fluxx - <https://eha.fluxx.io>) and familiarize yourself with all the sections you need to complete.

It may take **up to two business days before you get access** to the system. Registrations are approved Monday to Friday between 8:00 -18:00 hrs Amsterdam time.

If you already have an account, please use the same credentials to access the portal. For technical questions on your Fluxx account, do not hesitate to contact the Talent Accelerator team at EHA at EHA-Grants@ecorys.com.

Please refer to the **EHA Fluxx Guidelines** to see how to complete and submit an application in the system.

Download and read the **EHA Research Grants Terms and Conditions** which can be found on the Grants webpage. It is equally important that your mentor, head of department and relevant institute administrative/legal representative read and agree to EHA's terms and conditions at this phase. You are advised to contact them while preparing, to ensure their timely support. In case your research will be performed at another institute, ensure that this host institute's administrative/legal representatives have also read, understood and agreed to EHA's Terms and Conditions.

What to prepare

Prepare the documents you will need to upload as pdfs.

- ❖ **Project proposal of maximum 8 pages** (including figures, abstract and references). If you go over this limit, your application will be rendered ineligible and will not be reviewed.
- ❖ **SWOT analysis** of your research proposal, including your contingency plan. Consider the weaknesses, threats and if aims are interdependent, how you plan to deal with different scenarios. (**max 2 pages**).
- ❖ **Timeline** of your research project (**max 1 page**).

Remember to ask your Mentor, Head of Department and Institute representative to prepare the following:

- ❖ **Letter of Support from mentor** on your institute's letterhead, including description of the mentoring plan, duly signed (max 2 pages).
- ❖ **Head of Department letter**, (max 1 page) on the institute's letterhead, duly signed, to include:
 - a description of the institutional commitment and facilities to support the project
 - a description of how the proposed project will fit into the current research of the department
 - acceptance statement that possible overhead costs for this EHA grant will be paid for with other funds than the EHA grant

- acceptance statement that the Terms & Conditions as set forth on EHA’s website, are agreed to
- in case of a Physician Scientists’ Research Grant, a statement is required committing that at least 50% protected time will be allocated to the applicant for performing the research project (max 1 page)

If the mentor and the head of the department are the same person, please provide one letter including information required in both points (max 3 pages).

- ❖ A signed **Statement of Institutional Support** for the application in which it agrees to the terms & conditions as set forth by EHA, signed by the **legally mandated Administrative Authority of the Institute** (max 1 page)

Formatting requirements for your documents:

- Times New Roman, 11 pt., single space
- Combine the following into 1 pdf and name it
FirstName.LastName_ResearchProposal.pdf*
 - Project proposal (max 8 pages, including figures, abstract and references)
 - SWOT analysis (max 2 pages)
 - Timeline (max 1 page)

**Scans not allowed for the project proposal, SWOT and timeline document.*

- Each page should have a page number, the applicant’s name and project title in the header/footer
- Combine the following into 1 pdf, include page numbers and name it
FirstName.LastName_SupportLetters.pdf
 - Mentor Support letter (max 2 pages)
 - Head of Department letter (max 1 page)
 - Administrative Authority letter (max 1 page)

What to expect - Process:

Deadline and Eligibility check

Once you have submitted your application in the EHA grant management system and after the deadline has passed, the EHA office will start checking whether your application is complete and whether it meets the eligibility criteria.

Applications that are not complete (signatures missing, no budget, etc.) or do not meet the criteria for eligibility (not working at an academic institute, etc.) will not be reviewed further.

You will be notified if your application did not qualify for review. This decision is final.

Preliminary Review

The Fellowships & Grants Committee will perform a preliminary review of the applications and decide which applications will proceed to the next stage, which consists of an in-depth review by external reviewers.

You will be notified whether your application succeeded this first round of review. Other than the notification, there will be no further feedback at this stage.

External Review

At least 3 external reviewers, who are experts in your field, will be reviewing your project in detail to assist the Fellowships & Grants Committee in the selection procedure. In your application, you will have indicated a maximum of 2 research groups and/or PI's that you wish to exclude from reviewing your application (e.g., a direct competitor) and this information will be considered.

The external reviewers will score your application based on the following parameters:

<p>PROJECT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Significance and impact of the proposal2. Novelty of the proposal3. Methodological approach of the proposal4. Feasibility of the proposal5. Host institute/scientific environment where the research will be conducted <p>INVESTIGATOR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Commitment to research7. Track record and international standing <p>BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Are the budgeted activities clearly listed and assigned? Is the cost estimate of resources/activities researched and substantiated? <p>OVERALL EVALUATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">9. To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges? To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g., novel concepts and approaches)? To what extent is the proposed research high risk/high gain? Can the project be completed in the proposed time frame?

This external review will produce feedback for the committee as well as feedback for you as the applicant. Irrespective of the outcome of your application, you will receive this feedback after the winners are announced. It is hoped that this feedback will provide you with some guidance on how

you could improve your application or research plan. Please note that there will be no further correspondence regarding this feedback.

Based on the external review feedback, the Fellowships & Grants Committee will decide who to invite for an interview and you will be notified of the results.

Interview meeting

If you are selected for an interview, this will be conducted in May 2024 via videoconference. The exact dates and time will be communicated with those whose applications will be externally reviewed.

During the interview, you will be expected to present your proposal to the Fellowships & Grants Committee in 5 minutes, followed by a question-and-answer session. You are advised to spend some time rehearsing your presentation to give a quality performance at the interview meeting.

What EHA funds and what EHA does not fund

EHA funds:

The funds may be used to provide support for salary and small items of equipment, supplies and/or travel, if this is necessary for advancing the research project. Traveling to and attending the EHA congress during the project period should be part of the budget. These research grants are intended for preclinical research (lab research). In any case, all expenses must be in accordance with the approved budget.

EHA does not fund:

- Overhead costs
- Expenses that are not accompanied by an accurate and sound justification in the application template
- Costs that have not been approved (in the approved original budget or if changes have been requested, in an approved amendment)
- Costs for research performed completely and solely by others, not by the applicant (merely overseeing the work while absent in the lab is not considered performing the work). In which case, the one doing the actual work should apply.
- Costs that are covered by other funds, even if new funding is acquired during the project, making (parts of) the EHA grant redundant (any acquired funding must be communicated within 30 days after awarding to grants@ehaweb.org), detailing the amount, which items the funding has been approved for and how this impacts the overall funding of the project
- An excessive travel scheme for attending (scientific) meetings, including stay in excessively expensive hotels (5 stars and above) and business/first class flights
- Costs that are not directly relevant to the research.

5. Practical information for your mentor

Your support for the application

Your mentee is applying for an EHA Research Grant to conduct research in your center. Please prepare:

1. Letter of Support from you on your institute's letterhead, including description of the mentoring plan (max 2 pages).
2. Head of Department letter, on the institute's letterhead, to include:
 - a. a description of the institutional commitment and facilities to support the project
 - b. a description of how the proposed project will fit into the current research of the department
 - c. acceptance statement that possible overhead costs for this EHA grant will be paid for with other funds than the EHA grant
 - d. acceptance statement that the Terms & Conditions as set forth on EHA's website, are agreed to
 - e. in case of a Physician Scientist Research Grant, a statement is required that explains what protected time will be allocated for performing the research project. Please note that they must have at least 50% protected time in order to be eligible for an EHA grant.
 - f. signature by the chairperson of the department (max 2 pages)

If you are the mentor as well as the head of the department, please provide **one letter** including information required in point 1 and 2 (max 3 pages).

6. Practical information for your institute

Your support for the application

A researcher at your institute is applying for an EHA Research Grant to support their research. We invite you to read through the Terms & Conditions. If they are not acceptable to the institute, the applicant should be informed and asked to withdraw their application. Otherwise, please provide a letter of support agreeing to EHA's Terms and Conditions. This Letter must be on the Institute's Letter Head and signed off by you as the authorized Institute's Administrative Representative. The name of the institute and the details of the administrative authority, including their email address and job title must be accurately filled in, as this information will be used for the funding agreement.

Administering the grants

If your applicant wins the research grant, you will be asked for bank details to be included in the funding agreement and for you to sign the funding agreement on behalf of the institute. Please see 7.

Relevant to know

The EHA Research grant is awarded to the applicant to further their career. The institute administers the grant.

EHA will not cover/fund overhead costs. These costs must be covered by other funds.

7. Winning an EHA Research Grant

If you are selected as a winner, you will receive complimentary registration for the next EHA annual congress. You will receive your award during the opening ceremony, and you will be invited to pertinent social events. In your budget, you should include the costs for travel and accommodation to the EHA Congress.

Funding Agreement

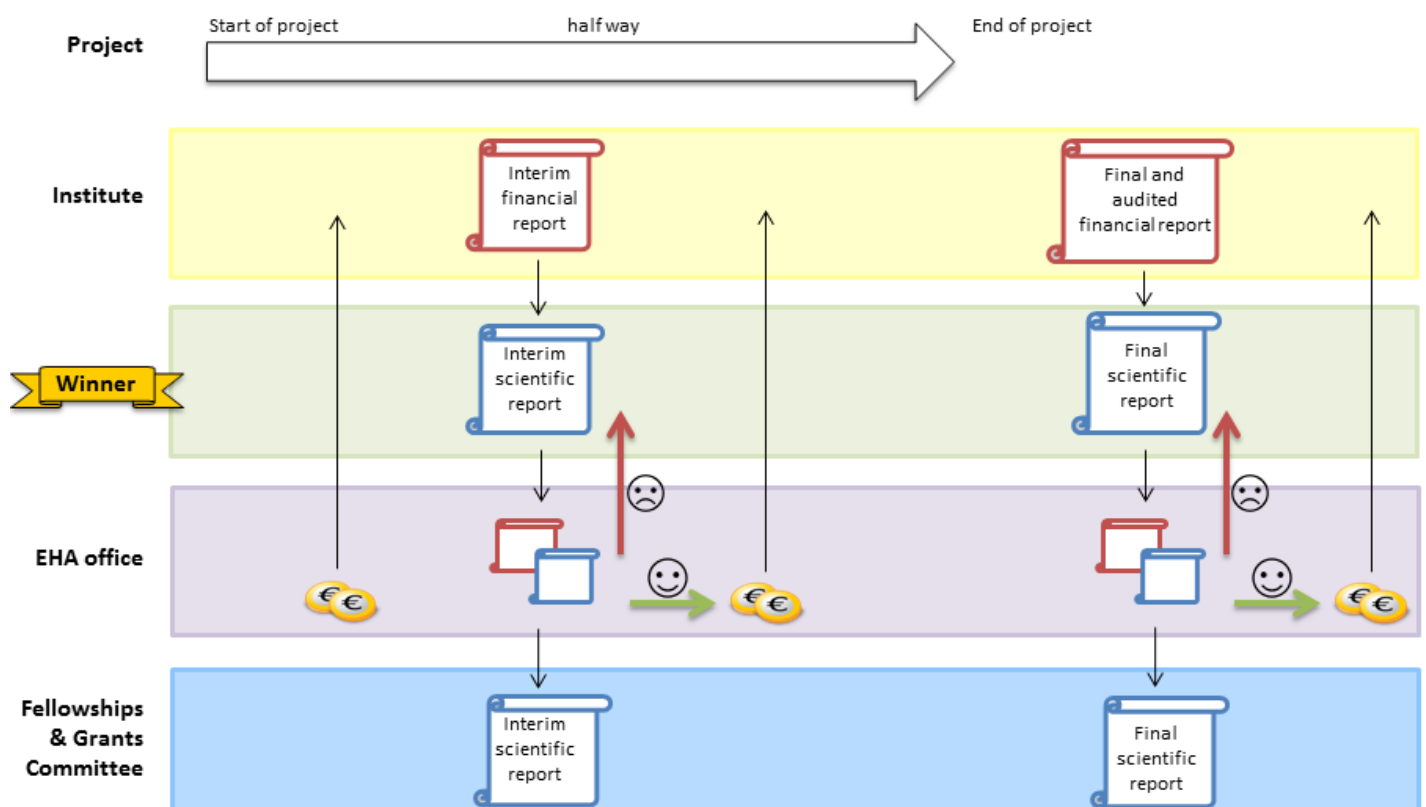
As a winner, you will provide necessary information for the funding agreement, e.g., bank details, project start date (note that you are required to start your project within one year of being awarded), etc. You and your institute will be required to sign the funding agreement, which refers to the Terms & Conditions that will have been read and approved during the application phase. Withholding this approval can result in ineligibility of the applicant and the withdrawal of the award. To reiterate, both the Grantee and Grantee Institute **MUST** be party to the EHA grant Funding Agreement.

Obligations

Once the funding agreement has been signed by all parties, EHA will transfer the first installment to the institute (according to the disbursement schedule in the agreement).

An interim Scientific and Financial Report is expected halfway through the project. Upon receipt and favorable review of these reports, the next installment of the funding will be paid. The templates for these reports will be provided upon winning. The scientific reports get reviewed by the Fellowships & Grants Committee.

Any publication arising from the work funded by EHA, must acknowledge EHA funding as stated in the Terms & Conditions.



The winner is responsible for collecting the financial reports from the institute and ensuring EHA receives the documents. Any changes requested by the winner e.g., different start date or re-allocation of funds, must be submitted via the Amendment request process.

Amendments

Any deviations from the approved project scope or budget are to be formally requested before being implemented. Please see Terms & Conditions or ask the Grants Manager via grants@ehaweb.org.

8. Finishing your grant period

Final reports must be submitted within 6 weeks of the project end date. Both financial and scientific reports are required. The financial report must be audited & signed off by an external auditor and the institute's financial head. Reporting templates will be made available via the grantee portal.

Questions and concerns regarding the application process

If you have any questions or problems about the application process or eligibility, please contact the EHA Talent Accelerator team at EHA-Grants@ecorys.com or call during office hours: +31(0)70 3020 099.