

Administrative rules applicable to the recruitment of grantholders under national law contracts within the framework of the research programmes managed by the Joint Research Centre

Article 1

Purpose of the scheme

Grantholder contracts are aimed at developing training, career development and mobility opportunities for researchers throughout their careers.

The Commission offers contracts under the national employment law of the site where the JRC institute is established to scientists embarking on doctoral studies or to established researchers who wish to participate in advanced research work conducted by an institute of the JRC.

Article 2

Categories and eligibility criteria

a) Nationality

Grantholders must be nationals of a Member State or an Associated State or must have resided in a Member State of the European Union for at least five years prior to the start of the grant.

In exceptional cases the Director General of the JRC may allow candidates from other countries to participate in the scheme.

b) Age

Category 20 and 30 grantholder contracts are aimed at researchers starting their careers or at the early stages of their careers.

Category 40 grantholder contracts are aimed at senior researchers. The age limit for grantholder contracts is normally 65 years of age. However in exceptional circumstances and for category 40 only, a derogation to permit a grantholder to stay up to the age of 67 years of age may be granted by the Director General of the JRC.

c) Qualifications

All qualifications required must be met at the time of the application for a grantholder contract unless otherwise specified in the provisions below.

Category 20

This category is intended for students who submit a proposal for doctoral studies related to a research area published in the institute's call for interest for grantholders. Prior agreement to follow the research project must be obtained from the professor responsible for following the thesis at the student's university.

The selected candidates must provide proof of enrolment in a university's doctoral studies programme before the grant may start and will have not more than six months from the date of the Commission's offer of a grantholder contract to produce this proof of enrolment.

Category 30

Researchers holding a PhD degree or having a minimum of 5 years research experience after the first university degree giving access to doctoral studies (which may include periods of training such as a masters degree), in a field relevant to the JRC's scientific activities.

Candidates who have not yet completed all the formalities to obtain a PhD or who have not yet attained 5 years of research experience on the date of application may also be considered as eligible to apply. However the PhD must have been obtained or the five years of research experience reached prior to the signature of the grantholder contract.

Category 40

Any senior scientist with a proven reputation in a field of science relevant to the JRC's activities and who has a minimum of 10 years research experience at post-doctoral level or a minimum of 15 years research experience after the first university degree giving access to doctoral studies (which may include periods of training such as a masters degree).

Candidates who have not reached the 10 years of research experience at post doctoral level or the 15 years of research experience after the first university degree on the date of application may also be considered as eligible to apply. However, the 10 years of research experience at post doctoral level or the 15 years of research experience after the first university degree must be reached prior to the signature of the grantholder contract.

d) Duration

Category 20 & 30

The minimum duration of the research project shall be one year and the maximum 36 months. In exceptional cases, where necessary to complete the work, the Director General of the JRC may accept up to an additional year (if this is permitted by the national employment law of the site).

Category 40

The minimum duration of the research project shall be 3 months and the maximum 24 months.

Article 3

Selection procedure

1. Grantholders of category 20 and 30 are selected through calls for interest organised on a regular basis or when the need arises by the JRC Institutes. The calls are published on the Internet. Candidates must introduce their applications on the form provided and following the procedures indicated.

Grantholders are chosen by a selection committee chaired by the Head of the Management Support Unit of the Institute concerned or his/her representative, and composed of one member representing the unit where the grantholder would be hosted and one member appointed by the Scientific Committee of the Institute.

The selection committee evaluates the applications and establishes lists of proposed candidates, which are then submitted to the Institute Director. Candidates who are not selected or who are not eligible shall be informed as soon as possible by the Management Support Unit of the Institute concerned.

2. Because of their very specialised nature and limited duration, calls for expression of interest for category 40 grantholders are not obligatory. However, in such cases, the Institute must publish on its website the projects of potential interest for category 40 grantholders, which will be updated as and when necessary, and institutes will maintain a "reserve list" of potential candidates. Each candidate will be assessed according to the Institute's needs, the applicants' scientific excellence, the relevance of the research to the JRC institutional or competitive programmes and the added value that would be brought by such a stay.

The Institute may also decide to launch a full call for expressions of interest for category 40 grantholders.

3. As a Directorate General of the Commission, the JRC endeavours to ensure a fair representation of women by promoting equal access opportunities for both men and women.

Article 4

Grantholder contracts

1. The grantholders shall be engaged under employment contracts, which conform to the national legislation of the site of the JRC institute in which the grantholder is to be based. A Vademecum on the provisions of the grantholder contracts and their particular terms and conditions will be provided to each potential grantholder.

2. The Institute Directors will ensure that grantholders enjoy the best possible conditions to carry out the research for which they were selected. In particular, the institutes will provide access to appropriate training where necessary, such as language courses and any other relevant training necessary for the grantholders to carry out their work.

3. The research or scientific work carried out by a grantholder does not and cannot replace the work carried out by officials of the European Communities or any other statutory staff covered by the Conditions of employment of other servants of the European Communities.

Article 5

Sequence of grantholder contracts

Any change from one type of grantholder contract to another must follow the logical sequence of category 20, then 30 and finally 40. Entry may be made at any level and specific levels may be skipped as long as the correct sequence is followed.

A grantholder may benefit only once from each category of grantholder contract. The award of a contract in the next category is determined by the needs of the service. There is no right or obligation to change from one category to another or to complete the full sequence of grantholder contracts.

The awarding of a subsequent grantholder contract in the sequence is possible only if this is permitted by the national employment law of the site concerned.

A grantholder contract may not be awarded following a contract agent or temporary agent contract. In exceptional circumstances, and only on those sites where the grantholder scheme had been suspended and where mobility is involved, grantholder contracts may be possible if agreed by the Director General. If a grantholder contract is offered following a contract agent or temporary agent contract a clear distinction must be made between the two types of contract and the job description and tasks must be substantially different.