

IAEA Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellowship Programme

Concept Note

Background

A workforce skilled in nuclear science is essential to realise the full potential of nuclear technology. Women face barriers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, including in education, which inhibits their chances of finding employment in these areas. Attracting women and girls to nuclear science and technologies and providing an environment for them to thrive in and progress are important in meeting the demand for a workforce with high STEM skills. Raising the overall participation of women and girls in the nuclear field will also contribute to gender equality in national programmes and at the IAEA.

Acknowledging the important role of education in developing a healthy pipeline of young professionals, the IAEA is setting up a fellowship programme for female students who wish to pursue a career in nuclear sciences and technologies. The programme provides scholarships for graduate degree programmes along with internship opportunities.

Objectives

The overall objective of the programme is to encourage young women to pursue a career in nuclear sciences and technologies.

The long-term vision for the IAEA fellowship programme is to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of women leaders in nuclear sciences and technologies, and to promote their effective participation in the scientific and technological development of their countries as a contributor to a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

Programme details

The IAEA Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellowship Programme provides opportunities to highly motivated and talented female students by providing scholarships and internships. Fellows will receive a scholarship for graduate degree programmes focussed on nuclear sciences and technologies and non-proliferation studies at an accredited university for up to a maximum of two years. Selected recipients will also receive an opportunity to pursue an internship at the IAEA related to their field of study for between 6 and 12 months.

The Programme is open for students from IAEA Member States who meet the following criteria:

- female candidates,
- above average academic credentials,
- fluency in Arabic, English, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish,
- acceptance by an accredited university for a relevant Master's course,
- for the internship: acceptance by the IAEA based on the established criteria for internships as described on www.iaea.org/about/employment/internships.

Up to 100 female students per year will be selected, subject to availability of funding. Geographical balance will be part of the internal selection criteria. Fellowships will be awarded once a year. The first round of fellowships will be awarded for the academic year starting in 2021.



The scholarship will cover university tuition fees up to a maximum of 10,000 euros per year and a lump sum payment for living expenses based on the cost of living for the university's location, up to a maximum of 10,000 euros per year.

The Programme offers internship opportunities for selected fellows for between 6 and 12 months. The stipend for the internship will follow the general rules of internships at the IAEA.

Budget and funding

Total funding needs for 100 fellows will be in the range of 4-6 million euros per year. Costs associated with the implementation of this initiative will be secured from extrabudgetary resources, in line with established Agency procedures.

Partners can engage in the Programme through

1. extrabudgetary contributions to the IAEA to fund a defined number of fellows (to be selected by the IAEA),
2. extrabudgetary contributions to the IAEA to fund pre-selected/nominated candidates with the final selection by the IAEA, or
3. in-kind contribution by universities (waiving fees/tuition).

Member States are encouraged to reach out to their national stakeholders from academia, the private sector, foundations, etc. to assess their interest in supporting the Programme.

Outreach

The Programme will be launched at the IAEA's International Women's Day event (9 March 2020) and will be promoted through a campaign via social media. An outreach toolbox will be developed to support universities and partners to encourage qualified candidates to apply. A dedicated webpage and, eventually, an alumni portal will be created, highlighting partners as well as students.

All partners of the Programme (universities, donors, collaborating centres, etc.) are encouraged to use their own communication channels to promote for the Programme.