



**THE CALL OF INTERNATIONAL
FELLOWSHIP FOR OUTSTANDING
RESEARCHERS PROGRAMME**

2232 -A



**Department of
Science Fellowships and Grant Programs**

International Fellowship for Outstanding Researchers



TÜBİTAK

TÜBİTAK-BİDEB 2232-A

International Fellowship for Outstanding
Researchers

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1. Purpose and Scope of the Call

In order to contribute to projects that will be executed in research fields that are of strategic importance for our country within the scope of the programme, it is aimed to promote qualified researchers, particularly Turkish scientists, who have come to the fore with top level scientific and/or technological achievements in their fields and who have experience to work in an international environment, to conduct their research in Türkiye, and to provide support for them to pursue their work in leading state or foundation universities, research infrastructures deemed competent within the scope of Law no. 6550, public research institutes, private sector companies with R&D or design centres or equity companies settled in Türkiye within the bodies of techno parks. The support base score will be determined separately for researchers working in the field of AI, providing an advantage to researchers working in this field.

This call announcement covers procedures and liabilities related to researchers who apply to the programme and/or who are supported by the programme.

***Definitions are included in Part 11 “Definitions and Abbreviations”.**

2. Scope, Amount and Duration of the Fellowship

2.1. Scope of the Fellowship

The programme will include

- a. Scholarship for the coordinator,
- b. Family allowance (if applicable),
- c. Initial research grant,
- d. Research project grant,
- e. Grant intended for establishing a research team (scholarship for up to 5 graduate students and post-doctoral researchers, the coordinator will include in the research team for conducting his/her research in Türkiye)
- f. Project Incentive Bonus for researchers involved within the scope of the research project,
- g. Institutional share allowance for host institution,
- h. Health insurance for the coordinator and his/her family,
- i. Travel allowance for the coordinator and his/her family.
- j. Mentoring Support

2.2. Amount and Duration of the Fellowship

- 2.2.1. Fellowship amounts for each item defined under the scope of the programme can be found on the programme's [website](#).
- 2.2.2. Fellowship period is minimum 24 months and maximum 36 months. Fellowship period for graduate scholars is indicated in Article 5.1.4 of this call announcement.
- 2.2.3. The coordinator is allowed to spend up to 3 months per year at his/her previous institution abroad as a means of facilitating the transfer of knowledge. The coordinator must notify TÜBİTAK about the duration of his/her stay abroad. As long as the duration of his/her stay abroad does not exceed upper limits indicated in this article, the project shall not be suspended, and fellowship and payments shall continue. Progress reports shall include detailed justification of the stay abroad period. If this duration is exceeded, Group Executive Committee shall decide if scholarship and project fellowship will continue.
- 2.2.4. If the coordinator finds full-time/contractual paid employment in any institution/organisation, the monthly payment shall continue for the coordinator and his/her family.
- 2.2.5. Initial research grant payment is offered to help the coordinator launch his/her research activities in Türkiye and to establish a suitable research environment within project period following the award of the grant.
- 2.2.6. On the application date, if the host institution is;
- SME-scale firm, 25% of the scholarship specified 2.1.a and 2.1.b is covered by the host institution,
 - Large-scale company, 40% of the scholarship specified 2.1.a and 2.1.b is covered by the host institution,
 - Foundation University, 25% of the scholarship specified 2.1.a and 2.1.b is covered by the host institution,
 - Public Institution or a State University, 100% of all support items specified in 2.1. are covered by TÜBİTAK.

- 2.2.7.** The coordinator is expected to complete his/her research within the fellowship period. Project duration can be extended without exceeding upper limit of the fellowship period, which is 36 months. Justified application of the coordinator is determined based on the consent of Group Executive Committee and the approval of TÜBİTAK Presidency. Cases where this period is exceeded are resolved by Board of Directors.
- 2.2.8.** Upon the coordinator's justified application, supplementary allowance that can be granted within the scope of the project is resolved, provided that it does not exceed upper limit valid on the date of the fellowship decision, based on the consent of Group Executive Committee and the approval of TÜBİTAK Presidency.
- 2.2.9.** Grant amounts within the scope of clauses c, d, e, f and g will be transferred to private account to be opened by host institution. Grants in other clauses will be directly transferred to the coordinator's account by TÜBİTAK.
- 2.2.10.** Expenses related to transferred grants, depending on the type of institution to which the amount will be transferred, "Principles and Procedures on the Expenditure of the Amounts to be Transferred from TÜBİTAK Funds to General Budget Public Administrations and Special Budget Administrations in Return for Projects, and on the Expenses of Externally Supported Projects Carried Out by TÜBİTAK", "Principles on the Transfer, Expenditure, Accounting and Audit of the Amounts to be Granted by TÜBİTAK to Private Institutions and Foundation Universities in Return for Projects", or "Procedures and Principles to be Applied in the Financial Transactions concerning the Amounts to be Transferred from TÜBİTAK funds to Research Infrastructures and Public Administrations Falling Outside the Scope of Public Finance Management and Control Law No. 5018 in Return for Projects".

3. Eligibility Criteria, Required Documents and Application Method

3.1. Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1.1.** Researchers applying to the programme are obliged to be working abroad as of the first day of the application.

3.1.2. Researchers, who will apply to the programme, shall not be located in Turkiye more than 6 months within the last 3 years as of the first day of the application. Force majeure to be accepted by Group Executive Committee and compulsory military service are not within the limits of this period.

3.1.3. As of the first day of the application, any of the work experiences set forth below shall be met.

- Researchers who have completed their doctoral degrees and at least 4 years have worked for in a university or public research centre abroad as an at least assistant professor, team leader or carried out independent academic research
- Graduate researchers who have 6-year full-time research experience abroad, provided that they work in private sector for a minimum of 3 years (Maximum 1 year of master degree (with thesis) completed abroad and maximum 3 years of doctoral degree completed abroad is evaluated within this scope).

3.1.4. Researchers who have the work experience set forth in Article 3.1.3. must meet one of the following requirements.

- Being on the "[Highly Cited Researchers List](#)" published by Thomson Reuters in any year within the last three years as of the first day of the application,
- Working uninterruptedly for 48 months at least in an institution among those ranked below in any year within the last 5 years as of the first day of the application:
 - ✚ Top 100 universities in the field-based rankings according to [QS \(Quacquarelli Symonds\)](#) or [THE \(Times Higher Education\)](#) World University Ranking
 - ✚ [World's Top 2500 Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard](#) published by the European Commission Joint Research Centre
 - ✚ Top 250 institutions in the sub-fields of health, higher education, public and private sectors according to [Scimago Institutions Ranking](#)
 - ✚ Successful start-up and unicorn companies receiving the most investment

- “[Unicorn](#)” companies list published by CBInsights and reached 1 billion USD and over valuation from its venture level
- Top 1000 companies founded within the last 5 years and received the most investment in the last 5 years according to databases of Crunchbase and CBInsights

3.1.5. Researchers who have fellowship from any other public institution and already have compulsory service obligation cannot apply to this programme.

3.2. Application Documents

3.2.1. [Research plan and project proposal form](#) to be prepared by the applicant coordinator, covering his/her arrival reason, research projects/plans he/she will carry out upon his/her arrival, and post-programme career plan

Applications will be evaluated based only on the informations/documents uploaded to the system. Therefore, documents related to each requirement must be submitted with clear and required content. If necessary, additional information/documentation may be requested. Before the application, the Researcher Information System (ARBIS) record must be updated.

See: Article 6. Evaluation

3.3. Documents Required to Initiate the Fellowship

3.3.1. The coordinator must submit the information/[documents](#) to bideb-pts.tubitak.gov.tr and initiate research within 12 months at the latest upon the notification of the fellowship decision.

After documents set forth in Article 3.3.1. are submitted, fellowship agreement is prepared by TÜBİTAK. The agreement must be submitted to TÜBİTAK once it is signed by the following representatives of the host institution/organisation where the research will be conducted.

- Top level director/representative (rector, general manager, president, etc.) of the host institution/organisation;

- Top director (dean, institute director, etc.) of the research unit and unit director (head of department) in case the host institution is a university, or
- Director if the host institution is a research infrastructure deemed competent within the scope of Law No. 6550, or
- Person(s) with the most extensive representation and signature authority if the host institution is a private sector company.

3.3.2. The coordinator may request postponement for a period of maximum 6 months due to force majeure. If deemed appropriate by Group Executive Committee, such extension may be granted.

3.4. Application Method

- 3.4.1.** Applications will be made online via <https://tybs.tubitak.gov.tr/> within the dates indicated in the call announcement.
- 3.4.2.** At the application stage, candidates are not required to upload any additional documents to the application system (TYBS) other than the research plan and project proposal form. Candidates must undertake that the information they enter into the system is correct and they will comply with the program obligations. Education, exam etc. information is displayed through online systems. However, candidates whose information cannot be viewed through online systems are not required to attend training, exams, etc. upload their documents to the application system. Documents to be uploaded to the application system must be in Turkish or English.
- 3.4.3.** No documents are required to be submitted to BİDEB at the application stage.
- 3.4.4.** Coordinators who are awarded with support must upload the required documents to the system in order to initiate the support after the support decision is announced (See: Article 3.3).
- 3.4.5.** Application can be withdrawn at any stage. For withdrawal, a petition must be sent to BİDEB stating the application year and period. BİDEB will update the application after receipt of the petition.

4. Provisions Related to Researchers Who Will Take Part in Project Team

4.1 Provisions Related to Researchers within Project Team

- 4.1.1. Those who have been working in the project, and, at least, have a bachelor's degree may take part in the project as researcher upon the request of the coordinator and the consent of Group Executive Committee.
- 4.1.2. Researchers can take part in the project as of the date they are declared to BİDEB by the coordinator. Researchers cannot be added to the project retrospectively.
- 4.1.3. Changes related to researcher, including appointment and dismissal are made upon the justified application of the coordinator and the approval of Group Executive Committee.
- 4.1.4. After the project takes effect, status of researchers going abroad temporarily will be determined by TÜBİTAK upon the written notification of the coordinator.

5. Provisions Related to Scholars Who Will Take Part in Project Team

5.1. Eligibility Criteria for Scholars within the Scope of the Programme

- 5.1.1. Turkish and international students (except for special students and preparatory foreign language students) receiving graduate education in Turkish higher education institutions and Turkish and international post-doctoral researchers pursuing their post-doctoral studies in Türkiye can take part in the project as scholars. Maximum two scholars taking part in the project team can be master student, and only one of them can be a post-doctoral researcher.
- 5.1.2. Scholars who are awarded a scholarship within the scope of this programme may not receive any scholarship from any BİDEB programme at the same time. In order to be eligible for a scholarship within the scope of this programme, other BİDEB

scholarship needs to be suspended during this fellowship period. This act of suspension does not eliminate his/her obligations for the other BİDEB scholarship programme.

- 5.1.3. Matters related to scholars' appointment, dismissal or similar changes shall be resolved based on the justified application of the coordinator and relevant decision of Group Executive Committee. If there are less than 6 months left until the end of the project, the newly added scholarship holder will receive a scholarship payment until the end of the project period, provided that the maximum period is not exceeded.
- 5.1.4. The maximum duration of the scholarship to be given to scholarship holders within the scope of the program is until the end of the project period. However, from the date of registration to the doctorate, if the education period exceeds 12 semesters for post-master doctorate education and 14 semesters for post-graduate doctorate education, scholarship cannot be paid.
- 5.1.5. If graduate students who will take part in the project team are not yet graduated by the end of project period, their scholarship, provided that their active studentship continues, be paid within the scope of 2210 / 2211 A National MSc/MA/PhD Scholarship Programme and within the framework of 2232 Programme scholarship limits as their total scholarship period in both programmes shall not exceed 24 months for master education and 48 months for doctoral education. In this situation, the scholarships of those who do not graduate within the maximum period of time or who leave the doctoral program are abolished. Scholars' scientific preparatory period may not be included in scholarship period. The student who is added to the project in the last 6 months cannot be accepted within the scope of the scholarship program mentioned above.
- 5.1.6. If doctorate or master scholars generate income from another place in the form of fee, wage, commercial revenue, etc., scholarship will be partially paid.
- 5.1.7. Scholarship holders whose study is suspended by the institute will not be paid within these periods. Scholarship periods and maximum periods of those who are in this situation can be extended as much as the suspension periods. When necessary, TÜBİTAK may request documents on this subject from the scholarship holder.

6. Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated in three stages.

6.1. Eligibility Check

At this stage, the information/documents entered into the system during the application will be checked. Applications which do not meet any of application criteria, are submitted after the application deadline, and are submitted via fax or e-mail will be returned during the eligibility check without being subject to scientific evaluation.

6.2. Scientific Evaluation

Scientific evaluation will be carried out by expert Turkish and/or international panellists/supervisors according to the following criteria.

- 6.2.1. Academic career of the applicant who meets application criteria set forth in Article 3.1. and his/her academic achievements to date (mobility, decisiveness, thematic scope, academic efficiency) (Weight 20%)
- 6.2.2. 5-year research plan of the applicant who have met application criteria set forth in Article 3.1. during and after the fellowship (research subject/subjects, research calendar, complementary financial forecast, academic and personal development goals) (Weight 20%)
- 6.2.3. Publication quality constituting the basis of research plan of the applicant who has met application criteria set forth in Article 3.1. (authenticity, innovativeness, evaluation of contribution in publications with multiple authors) and/or his/her patents (Weight 20%)
- 6.2.4. Qualification of Research Project (Weight 40%)
 - 6.2.4.1. Qualification evaluation of research project will be based on the following criteria.

6.2.4.1.1. Excellence (Weight 16%)

- Within the scope of the purpose of the call, scientific and technological qualification of research project, its innovation level (innovation and invention potential) and its interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary characteristics, if any.

6.2.4.1.2. Impact (Weight %16)

- Within the scope of the purpose of the call, potential of project's expected outputs and outcomes for tackling problems, commercialisation, reducing country's foreign trade deficit and/or increasing its competitiveness,
- The plan to disseminate project activities and outputs to various target groups.

6.2.4.1.3. Implementation (Weight 8%)

- Consistency and efficiency of the work plan,
- Feasibility of the work packages and the budget,
- Management structure of the project, including risk management, and compliance of monitoring processes,
- Suitability of the infrastructure of the host institution.

Panel evaluation results will be finalised upon the consent of Group Executive Committee and the approval of TÜBİTAK Presidency. The applicant and host institutions/organisations are informed about fellowship decision through relevant website updates.

6.3. Information / Document Control

At this stage, the candidate must upload the [documents](#) containing the information declared during the application to tybs.tubitak.gov.tr within 15 days from the date of notification to the candidate.

The application of the candidate who submits documents that are incomplete, incorrect, or different from the information declared in the application will be returned.

7. Monitoring and Finalisation

7.1. General Provisions on Grant Transfer and Expenditures

- 7.1.1. Monthly scholarship and family allowance will be transferred to the applicant coordinator's account by TÜBİTAK as of the start date of the fellowship until the tenth day of each month within the framework of budget and cash status.
- 7.1.2. Initial research grant payment shall be transferred to project's special account opened by the host institution upon the signing of agreement within the framework of budget and cash status as specified in Article 2.2.5. If the host institution is a private sector company, a warrant equivalent to initial research grant shall be provided by this private sector company over values specified in Law no. 4734. Initial research grant is spent within the scope of procedures and principles mentioned in Article 2.2.9.
- 7.1.3. First term allowance of the budget approved for research project grant will be transferred to project's special account upon the signing of the agreement by both parties, and other term allowances will be transferred depending on the approval of progress reports within the framework of budget and cash status. If the host institution is a private sector company, a warrant equivalent to the highest term allowance of the research project shall be provided by this private sector company over values specified in Law No. 4734.
- 7.1.4. Within the scope of research project grant, researchers (except for the coordinator) taking part in services related to the project are paid Project Incentive Bonus (PIB) in amounts determined by Board of Directors. 50% of total PIB is paid upon the approval of progress reports and the other 50% is paid upon the approval of final report. If the host institution is a private sector company, researchers working in this organisation are paid an amount equivalent to project incentive bonus.
- 7.1.5. Scholarship expenses of scholars, who will be included in research team by the coordinator for research he/she will conduct in Türkiye, will be transferred to project's special account opened by the host institution as of the periods determined within the scope of research grant and within the framework of budget and cash status.

Scholarships are paid by the host institution within the first week of the subsequent month.

- 7.1.6.** Expenses are incurred within the framework of principles the host institution/organisation will be subject to in TÜBİTAK legislation, depending on its feature. The host institution/organisation will be held responsible for the compliance of expenses with agreement provisions and legislation.
- 7.1.7.** Institutional share allowance for the host institution shall be transferred to project's special account by TÜBİTAK within the scope of principles and procedures specified in Article 2.2.9 and within the framework of budget and cash status. If the host institution is a private sector company, institutional share allowance of such period is paid following the approval of the progress report. The host institution/organisation is held responsible for the expenditure of institutional share allowance within the scope of R&D activities.
- 7.1.8.** Allowance for the coordinator and his/her entire family's travel to Türkiye is covered for once by TÜBİTAK during the project in return for documents. Transportation expenditures are not covered. This allowance is not paid for coordinators working on a permanent basis in Türkiye at the start date of support.
- 7.1.9.** Insurance support for the coordinator and his/her entire family is covered by TÜBİTAK within the scope of upper limits, in return for documents. If the coordinator starts working within the scope of Law no. 5510, insurance support is interrupted.

7.2. Progress Reports and Final Report

- 7.2.1.** In line with the detailed work plan proposed during the application, the coordinator is responsible for submitting progress reports on the dates specified in the agreement as well as a final report covering project's all scientific, technical, administrative, financial developments and outcomes by the end of fellowship period.
- 7.2.2.** Progress reports are expected to be submitted on the date specified in the agreement, while the final report is expected to be submitted within two months following the

research completion date. Scholarship payments of the coordinator, who has not submitted progress reports until the specified date, are suspended. A financial report covering reasons and breakdown of expenses of such period should be included in the appendices of progress reports and final report. If the host institution is a private sector company or a foundation university, certified councillorship report is also sought.

- 7.2.3.** Progress reports and final report are evaluated by expert counsellors assigned by TÜBİTAK.
- 7.2.4.** TÜBİTAK, if deems necessary, may invite the coordinator to inquire about the progress or assign person and/or persons it will determine to inspect and audit the research in scientific, technical, administrative and financial terms.
- 7.2.5.** Final reports are approved or rejected by Group Executive Committee decision as a result of the evaluation carried out by expert counsellors assigned by TÜBİTAK. The project whose final report is approved is deemed to be completed. For the project whose final report is rejected, abolition and cancellation provisions are applied, depending on the rejection reason. After the project is completed, the outstanding balance in the project's special account is returned to TÜBİTAK's account.

7.3. Suspension, Abolition and Cancellation

- 7.3.1.** Project's suspension, abolition or cancellation is carried out in accordance with Principles and Procedures on the Implementation of Scholarship and Fellowship Programmes of Department of Science Fellowships and Grant Programmes.

7.4. Other Provisions

- 7.4.1.** The coordinator's host institution change is subject to the approval of TÜBİTAK. While a demand is made by the coordinator, opinion letter of the existing host institution and support letter of the new host institution should be submitted.

7.4.2. If the host institution is a university, the coordinator must lecture at least two courses every year in the host institution.

7.4.3. It is the responsibility of the coordinator to update address, e-mail or telephone number changes in two weeks at the latest within Researcher Information System (ARBİS) and to notify BİDEB.

8. Ethical Rules

8.1. Ethical Rules

8.1.1. All parties signing the fellowship agreement must abide by universal scientific research and scientific publication rules during the implementation of the project. If the study requires, due legal and special permissions must be obtained with the approval certificate of Ethics Committee. In case of a violation of the rules listed above, proceedings on concerned parties will start as per the provisions of Regulation on Research and Publication Ethics Board and Industrial Ethics Board.

9. Call Calendar (Application Period, Start and Finish Dates)

| Application Period | Start Date | Finish Date |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| 2023-2 | 29/09/2023 | 15/12/2023 |

10. Relevant Legislation (Regulation, Principles and Procedures, Evaluation Directive)

10.1. Regulation on Programmes Executed by TÜBİTAK Department of Science Fellowships and Grant Programmes

- 10.2. Principles and Procedures on the Implementation of Scholarship and Fellowship Programmes of Department of Science Fellowships and Grant Programmes
- 10.3. Directive on Evaluation and Monitoring of Applications and Reports in BİDEB Fellowship and Grant Programmes through Panel/Advisor/Advisory Board method
- 10.4. Principles and Procedures on the Expenditure of the Amounts to be Transferred from TÜBİTAK Funds to General Budget Public Administrations and Special Budget Administrations in Return for Projects, and on the Expenses of Externally Supported Projects Carried out by TÜBİTAK
- 10.5. Principles on the Transfer, Expenditure, Accounting and Audit of the Amounts to be Granted by TÜBİTAK to Private Institutions and Foundation Universities in Return for Projects
- 10.6. Principles on the Expenditure of the Amounts to be Transferred from TÜBİTAK Funds to Public Institutions and Organisations Falling Outside the Scope of General and Special Budget Administrations in Return for Projects

Group Executive Committee decisions will be implemented in cases that are not specified in relevant legislations and programme call announcement and in avoiding doubts that may arise during the implementation of the programme.

11. Definitions and Abbreviations

- **Research Plan:** The coordinator's 5-year research plan covering fellowship duration and post-fellowship research subject/subjects, research calendar, complementary financial forecast, academic and personal development goals,
- **President:** President of TÜBİTAK,
- **Presidency:** Presidency of TÜBİTAK,
- **BİDEB:** Department of Science Fellowships and Grant Programmes,
- **Fellowship Duration:** Time from project start date to project completion date as specified in the agreement,

- **Progress Report:** A report prepared on the dates specified in the agreement by the coordinator in accordance with format and procedures determined by TÜBİTAK in order to monitor periodical developments of research plan and research project,
- **Group:** Units established to develop and implement systems that will promote and support science and technology related research, development and innovation activities, which are under the responsibility of BİDEB,
- **Group Executive Committee (GEC):** Executive Committee for Science Fellowship Groups that provides opinions, suggestions and decisions about group activities,
- **Mentoring Support:** Support provided by coordinators who were previously entitled to support in the 2232 International Fellowship for Outstanding Researchers Programme,
- **Special Account:** A bank account which will be opened by the host institution/organisation in any bank, to which grant awarded within the scope of the programme will be transferred and which will only be used for expenditures within the scope of the project,
- **Private Sector Company:** Equity companies which are settled in Türkiye or located within the bodies of techno parks, that have obtained R&D or design centre certificate within the scope of Law no. 5746 on Supporting Research, Development and Design Activities, that have R&D units,
- **Panel:** A meeting held by expert scientists assigned for evaluating scholarship and fellowship applications,
- **Panellist:** Experts assigned for submitting their opinions at meetings where applications for scholarship and fellowship programmes, which are executed by BİDEB, are evaluated,
- **Project Incentive Bonus:** Provided that it is limited to the project duration, amounts paid to staff of or any individual holding a position in public institutions or organisations who work within the scope of the project and assigned in services related to this project, which are determined in the project agreement according to principles set forth by Board of Directors and which do not exceed 75% of the monthly wage of project staff depending on their positions,

- **Project:** All activities undertaken for achieving a result, whose success criteria and goals are defined, and carried out in a certain period of time and with a specific amount of resource,
- **Final Report:** A document prepared in compliance with the format specified by TÜBİTAK, which demonstrates added value and achievements obtained from project outcomes and outputs at the end of the fellowship,
- **Agreement:** Written agreement and its annexes signed by and between TÜBİTAK and the coordinator and host institution/organisation after fellowship decision is made by TÜBİTAK, which set forth scope of the fellowship, its duration, legal, administrative and financial provisions, intellectual and industrial property rights, special terms and responsibilities of parties,
- **University:** State and foundation universities,
- **TÜBİTAK:** Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye,
- **Coordinator:** A researcher who comes to Türkiye to conduct research within the scope of the programme, holds all kinds of scientific, technical, administrative, financial and legal responsibilities of the project, and submits scientific, technical, administrative and financial reports to TÜBİTAK within time intervals defined in the project agreement,
- **Board of Directors:** TÜBİTAK's Board of Directors.