



Guidelines for Applicants 2026

Partenariat Hubert Curien (PHC) Tournesol
Joint Mobility Projects
between the
Embassy of France in Belgium
and the
Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO)

From January 14th 2026 to March 31st 2026, the call is open for two-year joint Tournesol mobility projects between research groups from France and Flanders in the framework of the Cooperation Agreement signed by the French Embassy in Belgium and the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO) on the 2nd of April 2024.

Please be aware that the guidelines as stated in this document are to be respected by the research team(s) in Flanders. For specific requirements, eligibility criteria and procedures at French side, please consult the [website of Campus France](#).

I. Definition and Objectives of the Collaboration

The PHC Tournesol programme aims to establish scientific collaborations and exchanges of expertise between Flemish and French researchers in **all scientific disciplines** – as long as it covers **fundamental research** – by funding joint scientific mobility projects that have a **duration of two years**. Please note that the project duration will be as follows: **01/01/2027 - 31/12/2028**.

The purpose of this joint mobility project should be to increase and develop relations between the scientific communities of both Parties, fostering the conditions for research cooperation, inter alia, through the exchange of junior scientists within the framework of joint mobility projects in order to:

- a) encourage bilateral fundamental research;
- b) exchange knowledge;
- c) promote the implementation of joint research activities.



The programme offers support by way of travel funds with **special focus on junior researchers**:

- At Flemish side, the Principal Investigator – who must hold a PhD – can only have a postdoctoral seniority of maximally 12 years. In addition, the researchers performing the exchanges towards France, can only be predoctoral researchers or researchers with a postdoctoral seniority of maximally 12 years.
- At French side, involvement of junior researchers in the project is highly appreciated. The Principal Investigator must hold a PhD and the seniority of the Principal Investigator is taken into account. If the Principal Investigator is a junior researcher, a letter of support from a senior researcher from his/her research team will be appreciated.

II. Guidelines for Applicants

The proposals should meet the usual requirements for scientific research quality and meet the specific requirements for scientific cooperation projects of the funding organisation they are submitted to (i.e. FWO or the French Embassy in Belgium).

Please be aware to always check, before starting your application, **if there are no restrictions in place regarding international cooperation in FWO funding instruments**. The FWO is keen on promoting international collaboration as a driver for excellence. However, a number of risks and challenges are present when collaborating internationally, regardless of the foreign funding partner. In order to safeguard fundamental values and avoid dual-use or military applications and to avoid breaches of academic freedom, integrity and ethics, the FWO is compelled to take some additional measures, also in its calls for joint mobility projects.

2.1. How to apply?

In order to be eligible, a proposal must meet the following criteria.

- **Who?** Projects must be endorsed by the **Principal Investigators** (PIs, being the supervisor-spokespersons), **one French and one Flemish**, duly authorized to conduct research and providing the guarantees on the operational (financial) resources. Principal Investigators (Flemish as well as French) are required to have a PhD degree.

In Flanders: PIs can only have a **postdoctoral seniority of maximally 12 years** (i.e. first PhD degree can be obtained maximally 12 years before the submission deadline (31/03/2026) of the project, to be counted from the date of obtaining the doctoral degree).

In addition, the Flemish PI must hold, throughout the entire period of the project, an appointment of at least 50% at:

- a university in the Flemish Community (including the academic programmes within the corresponding association), or to
- a federal or Flemish scientific institute as scientific staff of the Dutch-speaking community, or to
- a university hospital in the Flemish Community as scientific staff, or to
- a hospital with an academic character recognized as research center in the Flemish Community as scientific staff.

Please be aware: at Flemish (FWO) side, in the framework of this PHC Tournesol call, you can only act once as a supervisor-spokesperson or co-supervisor.

In France: The PI must be affiliated to a research laboratory itself affiliated to a higher education institution or a research institution (see [website Campus France](#)).

- **How?** Applications should be **submitted simultaneously** to Campus France by the PI in France and to FWO by the PI in Flanders, respecting the submission deadline and by using the respective application forms of each funder. **Lack of submission** of the application to one of the funders **and/or reception after the deadline** will cause the application to be considered **ineligible**. Please note that at FWO side the proposals should be **written in English**. The project title, names of the Flemish and French PIs, project description, methodology, work packages, etc. in the research proposal submitted by the Flemish and French PI should be **identical**.

In Flanders:

- At Flemish side, the application should be submitted through [the FWO E-portal](#) by using the specific **digital** application form under 'International collaboration / Mobility projects'. Please note that each online FWO submission is automatically confirmed by a confirmation email. If you did not receive such an email, please verify whether you properly submitted your application.
- Visits must be indicated in the application form, duly justified, including their duration, the estimated dates and names of the involved researchers.

- In Flanders, only predoctoral researchers or postdoctoral researchers (with maximally 12 years postdoctoral seniority, i.e. first PhD degree can be obtained maximally 12 years before the submission deadline (31/03/2026) of the project, to be counted from the date of obtaining the doctoral degree) can receive funding to cover travel and accommodation expenses abroad. In France, the active participation and mobility of junior researchers (PhD students or postdocs in particular) is seen as one of the main selection criteria (For specific requirements, see [website Campus France](#)).

Specific points of attention FWO application:

- Please note that, as a **mandatory upload** in the digital application form, the **'Template Curriculum Vitae'** (to be found [on the FWO webpage](#)) needs to be completed for **each** involved Flemish and French (co-)supervisor(-spokesperson). Please note that only the Flemish supervisor-spokesperson can upload these CVs in the FWO application.
- In addition, only the **Flemish supervisor-spokesperson should register at FWO by creating an online profile including an overview of academic positions and an updated list of publications on the FWO E-portal** before the submission deadline. Please note that the registration of your login/password **can take up to 24 hours**. It is therefore strongly advised to start well in advance.

Please be aware: Guidelines on formal requirements in application forms and accompanying documents of application programmes shall be strictly followed. If these are violated, the application may be declared inadmissible.

In France: At French side, the application should be submitted through the platform <http://chercheurs.campusfrance.org>.

2.2. Funding Principles

The funding within the frame of granted PHC Tournesol mobility projects shall be used to cover the **travel, accommodation and living expenses**. In principle, all missions must be executed within the period for which they have been approved and are not transferable to the next year of implementation. Allocated resources expire if not used within the year for which they were approved.

Each funder bears the full costs of its own researchers. Missions shall be funded as follows:

- FWO offers researchers from Flanders **up to max. 2,000 euros/project/year** for **travel expenses** to and from France (to be booked through [a travel agency authorized by the FWO](#)) **and accommodation costs** in France, only for predoctoral researchers or postdoctoral researchers (with maximally 12 years postdoctoral seniority).



- The French Embassy in Belgium offers researchers from France 2,000 euros/project/year for travel expenses to and from Belgium (to be booked through a travel agency authorized by Campus France). The grant awarded by the French Embassy in Belgium covers exclusively the payment of subsistence allowances (125 euros/day) and travel expenses for researchers of the French team (maximum reimbursement of actual expenses up to a maximum of 400 euros/round trip).

These amounts may be altered, if necessary, with the consent of both funders.

2.3. Evaluation

In a first phase, the eligible proposals will be evaluated separately by FWO and Campus France according to their own evaluation mechanisms.

At FWO side: Please be aware that **at Flemish side proposals will be evaluated by [the Cross-Domain Panel](#)**, an international panel composed of members with a broad variety of scientific expertises. **Therefore you are kindly advised to write your proposal for a wide scientific audience.**

The evaluation criteria [at FWO side](#) are:

- Scientific quality of the proposal
 - Expected impact/importance
 - Originality
 - Feasibility
 - Focus
 - Methodology
- Scientific track record, output and other impact of the applicants (Flemish and French)
- Added value of the collaboration of the research teams
- Complementarity in expertise of the research teams involved
- Balanced contribution of both research teams
- Necessity of the planned stays and exchanges

For the evaluation criteria **on the French side**, please consult the [website of Campus France](#) .

In a second phase, the decision on jointly funded projects will be taken in consultation with the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MESRI), the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MEAE) and FWO, during the **joint scientific committee** to be held in the Autumn of 2026. The proposal must have been evaluated positively on both the French and Flemish sides in order to be fundable.



Please note that in case of ex aequo priority will be given to:

- New collaborations;
- And/or projects involving junior researchers;
- And/or projects with an opening to the EU framework programme.

III. Exchange Visits

At FWO side, the research team as a whole may apply for a **total of 6 months per project (for the entire project duration of 2 years)**. This annual quota can be divided into **maximum 6 visits per year (or max. 12 visits per project)**. The unused exchange quota cannot be carried forward to the following year. Visits can only be performed by predoctoral researchers or postdoctoral researchers (with maximally 12 years postdoctoral seniority) holding, throughout the entire period of the exchange visit, an appointment of at least 50% at one of the eligible institutions in Flanders as listed under section 2.1.

1. Individual visits in the frame of granted PHC Tournesol projects need to obtain an approval from FWO. In order to obtain such visit approval:
 - The involved researcher in Flanders needs to apply (at least two months before departure) **by e-mail to interprog@fwo.be** with the '*Notification for a stay abroad*' form which can be downloaded at [the FWO website](#);
2. The sending Party should provide the host Party with all the details concerning the planned visit and the involved researcher(s), hereby requesting a final approval of the visit towards the host country.
 - Researchers in Flanders should detail in the '*Notification for a stay abroad*' form the profile of the researcher(s) involved, dates and destination of the stay abroad, and a detailed scientific programme of their stay abroad. The request should include an invitation letter of the host institution of the receiving country.

At French side, the PI must complete a commitment form and send the complete file at least three weeks before the researcher's departure to the email address indicated on the back of each commitment form. For each researcher mobility program, the French PI must also send a copy of the commitment form to the French Embassy in Belgium.



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IV. Timetable

- Launch of the new call for applications: January 14th 2026
- **Deadline** for submissions: **March 31st 2026**
- Eligibility and evaluation procedure: April-October 2026
- Joint Scientific Committee: October-November 2026
- Announcement of results: Beginning of December 2026
- Start of the joint mobility projects: January 1st 2027

V. Contact Details

The French Embassy in Belgium:

Ambassade de France en Belgique – Service de Coopération et d’Action Culturelle

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