Questions & Answers

Sparkle

Training Europe's Future Photonics Research Leaders

1. General:

➢ **Can I apply for more than one research project of interest?**

No. Only one application can be submitted per applicant in the duration of the open call. In the event of multiple submissions, the applicant will be contacted by the Programme Manager who will then together with the selected supervisor(s) choose the proposal to be evaluated. Any other submitted proposals involving the same applicant will not be evaluated and only one resubmission of an unsuccessful application will be allowed.

➢ **I would be relocating with my family. Is there any financial support available in terms of relocation costs?**

There is no relocation package available through SPARKLE Programme; however, candidates with families are offered higher remuneration.

➢ **Would I be able to influence my research topic together with my PI of choice?**

Yes. The list of potential research topics and academic supervisors will be available to all applicants, to enable their preferred choice of research area before they initiate the application process. Applicants have the freedom to select the research area and an academic supervisor that best match their career development ambitions.

➢ **Will I be able to contribute to the selection of the industry partner that I will be placed with?**

Yes. The choice of the suitable industry partner is based on their relevancy to the applicant's project and career development. At the application stage, the proposed IPIC academic supervisor, Programme Manager and the IPIC Industry Engagement Manager will assist the applicant to secure a high quality secondment host.

➢ **How do I know in which IPIC's host academic institution I will be placed?**

The academic institutions in which the successful applicants will be placed is governed by the location of the IPIC academic supervisor. A full list of IPIC supervisors together with the research areas of interest and their prime workplace will be available on the website.

2. Eligibility:

> **Is the SPARKLE Programme open to applicants from any country?**

Yes, the SPARKLE Programme is open to applicants of any nationality and resident anywhere in the world, provided they meet the Mobility Eligibility Criteria and have not lived or worked in the Republic of Ireland for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to the deadline date of the open call.

> **Can someone with research experience but without a PhD apply?**

Yes. A doctoral degree is highly recommended but not required, provided the applicant has at least 4 years of full-time equivalent research experience in academia or industry.

> **I have a PhD but not 4 years of equivalent research postgraduate experience yet. Can I still apply?**

Yes. The time dedicated to carry out doctoral degree research is sufficient to meet the eligibility criteria in terms of research experience.

> **How is the full-time equivalent research experience calculated?**

The full-time equivalent (FTE) research experience is measured from the date when the researcher obtained the degree entitling him or her to embark on a doctorate, even if a doctorate was never initiated or envisaged. Part-time research experience will be counted pro-rata.

> **How can I calculate my postgraduate research experience when applying for SPARKLE Programme?**

For those in possession of a doctorate, the overall postgraduate research experience is calculated taking into account time dedicated to the doctoral degree research and years of research following the PhD. For applicants who do not hold a PhD degree it is based on the full-time equivalent research experience.

- ➢ **Am I eligible If I lived/worked in Ireland for a period of 12 non-consecutive months in the last 3 years?**

  Yes. Applicants are eligible to apply if they did not live or work in the Republic of Ireland for a period of 12 or more *continuous* months in the last 3 years before the deadline date for the call.

3. **Application:**

- ➢ **How are the applications evaluated and how long does it take for them to be processed?**

  All applications will undergo a few-stage evaluation process, which on average will take two and a half months. All eligible submissions will be subject to an external international peer-review by three independent experts selected from an International Panel of Experts. Each reviewer will evaluate a maximum of 3 proposals. A scoring system will be applied based on which the submissions will be ranked and the most successful 10-12 applicants will be invited to a competency interview. SPARKLE Steering Committee will then select the final 5 - 6 candidates.

- ➢ **Do I need to submit documentation certifying the fulfilment of the requirements of the call e.g. PhD certificate or a proof of fluency in English?**

  No, this documentation is not needed at the application submission stage. You may be asked to show evidence at interview, and successful candidates will be required to present it prior to an employment offer being made.

➢ **Should my PhD diploma be translated into English?**

Applicants are not required to submit their PhD diplomas unless they are successful at the application evaluation stage. In such case, they may be asked to provide all the required documentation including a PhD diploma translated into English.

➢ **Is it possible to update my application or to submit additional information after the call deadline?**

No, unless specifically requested to do so, once the application has been submitted and the online system is closed, it is not possible for applicants to introduce any changes or provide additional information.

➢ **What happens if I accidentally omitted some information/material and my application is incomplete?**

Completeness of applications will be verified at the eligibility stage. Incomplete submissions will be deemed ineligible due to an extensive length of time for which the call is open.

➢ **I'm having difficulties accessing the application form on the system, or I cannot access information I need to complete my submission due to my current circumstances. Can I get additional support?**

Yes, we are here to help. You can contact us at info@ipic.ie.