

USIAS Fellowships 2025

Call for proposals

Guidelines for applicants

Deadline for applications: 15 October 2024 (13.00 CET)

Criteria

Applications should present an **original, ambitious, high quality research proposal**, in terms of topic, methodology or perspective (interdisciplinary), with the potential to make an original contribution to a certain scientific field, or enable the emergence of a new research field.

The fellowships are open to researchers **in any field** (life sciences, natural sciences and social sciences and humanities), with a doctorate or comparable degree currently employed at the level of **at least** assistant professor (tenure track) or equivalent. Applications from emeritus professors can be considered.

All applicants must provide **evidence of excellence** in accordance with their level of seniority.

Fellowships are granted for **a period of minimum 3 and maximum 24 months**, and are in principle expected to start between 01/09/2025 and 01/12/2025.

Joint fellowships can be submitted, with a **maximum of three applicants** for any one project.

The **budget** will be need-based, taking into account the differing requirements of different disciplines. The upper limit is 180 k€.

Candidates may apply for two consecutive years, provided that they passed the pre-selection stage the first time. After two applications, they should wait for at least one year before applying again. Applicants who did not pass the stage of pre-selection cannot apply in the year thereafter, but are asked to wait at least one year before applying again.

Former USIAS or FRIAS-USIAS Fellows cannot submit a new application within five years of the end of their Fellowship project. They can, however, act as host to external applicants.

USIAS Fellowships may not be used to complement, or as an extension to, another project; applicants should state whether applications have been submitted to other grant-awarding bodies for the same project and if other grants have been received.

Successful fellows are expected to spend sufficient time in Strasbourg to undertake and complete the project in the planned period. They are responsible for the proper management of their project and funds. Fellows are expected to regularly attend USIAS events (annual symposium, workshops, seminars, etc.) and present their results upon invitation. Fellows are required to acknowledge USIAS support in all publications and presentations related to their USIAS project. Upon completion of the project, Fellows will submit a final report outlining scientific achievements and financial management.

External applicants

Applicants from outside Strasbourg need to show how they will connect to the relevant academic community in Strasbourg. As part of the application, they will be asked to include a letter of support (**host letter**) from the hosting research unit with which they intend to interact. The role of the host is to help the external Fellow settle in and to connect him/her with the relevant research community in Strasbourg. A list of research units can be found [here](#).

External applicants can also submit a joint application with a Strasbourg-based researcher. The choice between applying with a host or a co-applicant would depend upon the expected involvement of that person in the project.

USIAS can finance a partial **reimbursement of salary** to the home institution of external applicants to cover teaching and administrative replacement costs. The estimated salary costs must be included in the project budget with an indicative total. Candidates should make sure they have advance consent from their home institution. Candidates may also envisage taking a sabbatical; if the salary is lower during sabbatical, a living cost complement may be possible.

External applicants are expected to **spend at least 50%** of the fellowship period in Strasbourg.

Information for foreign researchers is available on the university website [here](#).

Internal applicants

Candidates from Strasbourg need to show in what way the proposed research is **a change in direction** for them, requiring an above average investment in terms of time and effort (e.g. developing a new methodology, entering a new domain).

Candidates based in Strasbourg can ask for a **teaching dispensation** (limited to 50% of an annual teaching load, i.e. 96 hours per year of the fellowship), with the consent of the dean of their faculty. USIAS applies a fixed rate of 91 € per hour of dispensation.

Joint proposals that involve two Strasbourg-based applicants should clearly demonstrate the added value of the intended collaboration for the project, and why it would not be possible without USIAS support. **Applicants should in principle not be from the same unit**, and collaboration between different disciplines is particularly welcome.

Preparing an application

Applications must be submitted online in English by the deadline. An exception can be made for SSH candidates where the subject calls for an application in French, e.g. French literature, and where the external reviewers will be francophone; applicants must receive approval from the USIAS office prior to submission.

To apply, the applicant will need to register with the online application system. For joint applications, one application should be submitted. The person listed as applicant 1 will be the main contact for any correspondence from USIAS.

All uploaded documents should be in PDF format, using the templates provided. The format for documents is 12 pt font, 2.5 cm for all margins, and single line spacing.

Incomplete applications or applications that do not correspond to the criteria defined for fellowships will be considered as ineligible.

Applicants will be asked for the following information:

1. General details

- Name, institutional affiliation and contact details, gender, year of birth, nationality, research domain

Each applicant should indicate if they have previously submitted a USIAS proposal (that was not funded) within the last five years and, if applicable, explain how the current proposal is different.

Internal applicants will also be requested to provide information on the change of research direction, and **external applicants** will be asked to specify the amount and organisation of their time in Strasbourg.

For each applicant, the following documents should be uploaded with the required filename (i.e. one document per applicant). For a number of documents, a template is available on the call webpage.

Document to upload: Applicant information

Filename: [Family name of Applicant]_CV

Please use template provided. This includes:

Section I – Curriculum Vitae (max. 2 pages)

Section II – Track record: This is a short text (max. 2 pages) describing and explaining the applicant's academic work for the last 10 years, describing research skills, management skills and other relevant experience, highlighting significant contributions to the field. Applicants are also asked to list their top publications (up to 5) from the last 5 years, listing all authors. For **internal applicants**, the text should indicate at the end in what way and to what extent the research proposed in the USIAS project is new (change in direction) and how it fits in the track record.

Section III – Grant history (max. 1 page): This is an overview of **(1)** any grants the applicant has been awarded that are still active at the moment and **(2)** any other funding applications in the pipeline (either being prepared or already submitted).

Extra documents for **external** applicants only

Host letter (max. 2 pages)

Filename: [Family name of Applicant]_HL

External Fellows must have a host, i.e. a Strasbourg-based researcher who is in the same field and who will provide the physical and intellectual environment for the candidate to do the proposed research. The letter of the host may be written in English or in French and should specify how the external candidate would fit with the research done in the host's organisation and what the host's organisation can offer in terms of research environment. This letter should be signed by the director of the hosting research unit, and indicate which member of the unit will effectively be the host (if not the director).

Extra documents for **internal** applicants only

Accord du Directeur (1 page)

Filename: [Family name of Applicant]_ADi

Please use template provided

The agreement of the director of the applicant's research unit is required to ensure that s/he is aware of the application and agrees to the proposed research being potentially carried out in the research unit and its facilities.

Accord du Doyen (1 page)

Filename: [Family name of Applicant]_ADo

Please use template provided

If the applicant wishes to request partial teaching dispensation (max. 50% per year), the prior agreement of the Dean of the relevant faculty is required.

2. Project information

Some summary information on the project will be requested via the application form:

- Project title, anticipated start date and duration, total budget, research domain(s) involved
- Keywords (max. 10)
- Short summary of the project (max. 150 words)
- Short explanation of the originality of the project, why it is more than "business as usual" in terms of research (max. 150 words)
- Short explanation of the significance of the project, how it will impact the scientific field and possibly the wider world (max. 150 words)
- Applicants may provide details of up to three reviewers whom they do not wish to be contacted.

Document to upload: Project Proposal (max. 5 pages, including references; Section II is not counted in the page limit)

Filename: [Family name of Applicant 1]_Proposal

Please use template provided

Section I – Proposal text: The proposal should provide succinct information on **main aims, methodology and work plan**; it can include tables and graphics but should not exceed five pages, including references. Please ensure that sufficient (methodological) information needed for reviewers in the field to assess the feasibility of the project is present. If the project would involve collaborators or post-docs, please briefly describe their role.

Section II - Budget: Costs are expected to be proportionate and reasonable in relation to the project content and duration. A budget table is provided in the template as an example of costs that can be included, e.g. **human resources** (post-doc, research assistant...), **reimbursement of salary costs** (external applicants only), **teaching dispensation** (internal applicants only), **operating costs, equipment, consumables, events, travel, etc.** The budget (max. 180 k€) should provide a preliminary but realistic estimate of the costs of the project.

Additional notes:

Please provide detailed explanations and relevant information so that the intended use of the budget is clear, e.g. the duration and number of participants expected for events, details of specific (big) items for equipment or consumables, etc.

If the project involves human resources (e.g. a post-doctoral or other position) the duration of these positions cannot surpass the duration of the project, which is maximum two years, and the positions are expected to be based in Strasbourg.

The post-doctoral status applies to persons within a three-year period after having obtained their doctorate, and the salary is based on this, and experience. The minimum annual cost to budget is 41 k€ (< 1 year), 47 k€ (≥ 1 year and < 2 years) and 61 k€ (≥ 2 years and < 3 years). The minimum to budget for a researcher position is about 37.5 k€ per annum. A more experienced person may require a higher salary estimate; if that is the case, the need for a more experienced person should be justified. For other positions, e.g. engineer or technician, the salary costs should be in line with the scales applied by the university.

Including a **doctoral student** position will only be accepted as part of the project if additional sources of funding to guarantee the full period of doctoral studies are clearly indicated. The real monthly salary of a doctoral student is 2 300.

External applicants can request a (partial) **reimbursement of salary** to their home institution to cover teaching and administrative replacement costs. The estimated salary costs (full employment cost) must be included in the project budget with an indicative total. The Fellow retains the rights and benefits of his/her position at the home institution (such as social and health benefits) and ensures that s/he is covered during his/her time in Strasbourg.

Internal applicants can include a **teaching dispensation** (limited to 50% of an annual teaching load, i.e. 96 hours per year of the fellowship) at the fixed USIAS rate of 91 € per hour of discharge. Please indicate number of hours per academic year.

No **overhead or administrative costs** may be charged.

Evaluation and selection of applicants

Step 1: Eligibility check

Applications will be checked to ensure that they fulfil the eligibility check and call criteria. Any ineligible applications will be disqualified.

Step 2: Pre-selection

The USIAS Board will make a first pre-selection of applications received, based on the selection criteria mentioned in the call for proposals. Applicants will be informed of the outcome at the latest **two months** after the call deadline.

Step 3: Evaluation

All applications that pass the pre-selection stage will be sent to international experts for peer review. Proposals will be evaluated according to their originality, feasibility, significance, excellence and the quality of applicant(s).

Step 4: Selection

Based on the evaluations received from international experts, the USIAS Board will select approximately 15 applications for the award of a USIAS Fellowship.

Shortlisted candidates may be invited to an interview end March 2025. Further information will be provided in due course.

All candidates will be informed of the final outcome, and will receive the evaluations of their proposal for information.

Links

USIAS homepage: www.usias.fr/en

Current and former fellows: www.usias.fr/en/fellows

Contact

Enquiries should be sent to:

Dr. Rifka Weehuizen, Managing Director
info@usias.fr