

# Application guidelines

---

## Table of Contents

<b>1. About</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Eligibility</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Application process</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1. Timeline 2024</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.2. Application forms</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.2.1. ONLINE FORM</b>	<b>5</b>
Reference letters	6
<b>3.2.2. OFFLINE FORM</b>	<b>6</b>
Curriculum vitae	7
Publications	7
Your three best publications	7
Research plan	8
Networking	8
<b>4. Selection procedure</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.1. Pre-selection</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.2. External evaluation by an EMBO Member</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.3. Panel interview</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.4. Final selection</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5. Selection criteria</b>	<b>10</b>

Gerlind Wallon  
Programme Head  
[gerlind.wallon@embo.org](mailto:gerlind.wallon@embo.org)

Leonor Ruivo  
Programme Officer  
[leonor.ruivo@embo.org](mailto:leonor.ruivo@embo.org)

**Application deadline:** 1 June annually

**EMBC Associate Member States:** India, Singapore

**Countries / territories covered by a co-operation agreement:** Chile, Taiwan

**EMBO subject areas:** Cell Cycle, Cell & Tissue Architecture, Cellular Metabolism, Chromatin & Transcription, Development, Differentiation & Death, Evolution & Ecology, Genome Stability & Dynamics, Genomic & Computational Biology, Immunology, Membranes & Transport, Microbiology, Virology & Pathogens, Molecular Medicine, Neuroscience, Plant Biology, Proteins & Biochemistry, RNA, Signal Transduction, Structural Biology & Biophysics, Systems Biology

**Contact:** [global@embo.org](mailto:global@embo.org)

#### **EMBO Global Investigator Network Committee 2024:**

Cayetano González (ES) (Chair)  
Rosa Cossart (FR)  
Toni Gabaldón (ES)  
Gillian M. Griffiths (UK)  
Alwin Koehler (AT)  
Ilaria Malanchi (UK)  
Ruth Massey (IE)  
Christoph Müller (DE)  
Simona Radutoiu (DK)  
Wim Vermeulen (NL)

# 1. About

---

The EMBO Global Investigator Network supports group leaders who, at the time of application, are within their first six years of setting up their laboratories in an EMBC Associate Member State or in countries or territories covered by a co-operation agreement. Selected researchers become part of an international network of more than 600 current and former EMBO Young Investigators, Global Investigators, and Installation Grantees.

EMBO Global Investigators receive financial support for four years for training and networking activities, providing them with opportunities to form collaborations with scientists in their region and in Europe. After these four years, they remain associated with the network and have access to some of its benefits.

Applications to the EMBO Global Investigator Network are accepted annually via an online system. **Please check the eligibility criteria and carefully read the guidelines below before starting your application.**

Should you have any questions regarding your application, please contact [global@embo.org](mailto:global@embo.org).

# 2. Eligibility

---

Applications are accepted from candidates who meet the following criteria:

- Applicants should have been an independent group leader for at least one year and for less than six years on 1 January in the year of application. This means that the applicant should have obtained the independent status between 1 January 2018 and 1 January 2023 for the 2024 round. There is no age limit for applicants to the EMBO Global Investigator Network.
- Applicants should have an excellent track record.
- Applicants must perform research in the life sciences (see EMBO subject areas on page 2) in an EMBC Associate Member State (currently India and Singapore) or in countries or territories covered by a co-operation agreement (currently Chile and Taiwan).
- Applicants are expected to have obtained sufficient funding to run their laboratory.
- Applicants must have published at least one last author research paper in an international peer reviewed journal from independent work carried out in their own laboratory. Last author reviews will not be considered.
- Applicants must not have applied to this programme more than once in previous years.
- Applicants must be able to attend a virtual interview on 22 November 2024.

**Please note:**

- Last author research papers that are “in submission” by the application deadline (1 June) will be accepted. EMBO will also consider papers published on preprint servers (arXiv, BioRxiv, PeerJ., etc). However, at least one last author paper in an international peer reviewed journal must have “accepted” status by the day of the interview (22 November).
- For female candidates with children, the limit of six years since independence is automatically extended by one year per child.
- For male applicants with children, the limit can be extended by the actual time taken off as paternity leave or – if their partner is working at least 80% FTE (full-time equivalent) – 3 months per child, whichever is longer.
- Illness and extended military service are considered as exceptional circumstances and will be analysed on a case-by-case basis. Special provision may also be made for clinical scientists.
- Independence is defined by:
  - being able to apply for grants in one's own name and reporting directly to funding agencies.
  - being able to submit manuscripts as last author ('corresponding author' is not considered equivalent to 'last author').
  - being responsible for supervising graduate students and/or postdocs in one's own lab.
- Candidates who are applying to the EMBO Young Investigator Programme (YIP) can also apply to the EMBO Global Investigator Network in the same year if they meet the eligibility criteria, for which a separate application is required. Applying to both programmes in parallel does not affect your chances in either programme (the selection committees and EMBO offices are different). If you are invited for interviews by both, you only have to attend the Global Investigator Network interviews if you are not selected for the YIP. Please note that once you are selected as an EMBO Young Investigator, you cannot apply to the Global Investigator Network in the future. However, as an EMBO Global Investigator you can still apply to the YIP if you meet its eligibility criteria.

Please contact the EMBO Global Activities office ([global@embo.org](mailto:global@embo.org)) for eligibility advice before applying if:

- you are unsure whether you meet the criteria for an independent group leader;
- your transition to an independent group leader did not involve a formal change in position;
- you require an extension of the eligibility period due to illness, extended military service, or other exceptional circumstances.

# 3. Application process

---

Applications to the EMBO Global Investigator Network are accepted annually via an [online system](#).

## USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS

EMBO acknowledges the value of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, as well as human feedback, in the preparation of funding applications. Applicants are fully and solely responsible for the originality and accuracy of their applications. EMBO will continue following the developments in generative AI and adapt this policy as required.

## 3.1. Timeline 2024

<b>Deadline for applications</b>	1 June
<b>Pre-selected applicants invited to interviews</b>	By 31 July
<b>Online panel interviews</b>	22 November
<b>Results announced to applicants</b>	By 5 December

## 3.2. Application forms

Candidates are asked to submit a **full application** by 1 June, which consists of:

- an online form
- an offline form (protected Microsoft Word document) to be filled out and uploaded as a PDF file via the EMBO online application system.
- 3 reference letters (uploaded by the referees).

### 3.2.1. ONLINE FORM

In the [online form](#), you will be asked to provide:

- basic CV data
- your ORCID ID (if you do not have one, please register at <https://orcid.org/register>)
- details of three referees
- a short description of your institute
- a short summary of your ongoing research (2000 characters, including spaces)
- a list of your former and current lab members

- a list of all your former and current grants. Mark ‘pending’ if you have applied for a grant but it has not been approved yet. Please specify the funds available to your lab only and the total amount of the grant **in Euro**, separated by “ / ” (E.g.: 60,000 / 180,000)
- a PDF version of the completed offline form.

Further instructions for completing the online form can be found on the online application system. Once you are satisfied that your application is final, please mark the ‘Form complete’ checkbox in the final section of the form and press the ‘Submit’ button.

## Reference letters

References from three scientists (preferably former supervisors) are part of the application documents and **must also be completed by the deadline (1 June 2024)**. They can be listed and “activated” before the rest of the application is completed. Once referees are activated, the system will automatically send them an email with a link to submit their letter of reference online. The application form will remain open for the candidate to continue editing.

Reference letters must be submitted via the online system, accessible via the link each referee will receive via email. Referees shall follow the steps explained in the form and paste their letter text in the provided field. Letters sent to EMBO by email as PDF or Word files will not be accepted.

**We strongly recommend that you complete your referee contact details and activate them at least four weeks before the deadline to allow referees enough time to submit their letters.**

If you have recently applied to one of the EMBO Programmes and wish to re-use a previous letter of reference, please fill out the name and postal address of the referee but enter [global@embo.org](mailto:global@embo.org) into the email field. The EMBO Global Activities office will copy the reference letter from your most recent application.

**It is your responsibility to check that the referees have received the request and completed the form.** Reference status is listed on the “home” tab of the EMBO application system under the link to the application form. If a referee has not received the reference request, please contact the EMBO Global Activities office ([global@embo.org](mailto:global@embo.org)) so that the request can be sent again.

Applications that do not have all three reference letters are considered incomplete and will not be sent to the committee for review.

### 3.2.2. OFFLINE FORM

Please download the [offline form](#) from our website and fill it out following the instructions below:

- The form should be completed in Helvetica or Arial font, size 10.
- Margins and overall structure should not be altered. Highlighting, adding table borders and any other formatting is not acceptable.
- The form should be saved in PDF format for upload via the online system.

## Curriculum vitae

- Provide your professional experience and education in reverse chronological order i.e. with the most recent information first.
- Please include the month and year for the start/end dates. These should correspond to the dates entered in 'Scientific CV & Current Position' section on the online form.
- In general, the committee values mobility but recognises that there may be specific reasons why a candidate has remained at / returned to a former supervisor's institute. If applicable, please explain in brief.
- The 'Other relevant information' section should include only pertinent CV information and cannot exceed five lines. Do not attach any extra documentation.

## Publications

- Publications should be listed in a compact format, such as the one used in *The EMBO Journal* (see below).  
E.g.: *Thiru A, Nietlispach D, Mott HR, Okuwaki M, Lyon D, Nielsen PR, Hirshberg M, Verreault A, Murzina NV, Laue ED*. Structural basis of HP1/PXVXL motif peptide interactions and HP1 localisation to heterochromatin. *EMBO J.* (2004) 23: 489-499
- Sort your published or in-press primary research articles into the categories shown by the headings in the offline form, listing:
  - a) publications from different career stages in the relevant 'Publications arising from...' sections;
  - b) manuscripts submitted to peer-reviewed journals in the 'Manuscripts in submission' section;
  - c) reviews, comments, book chapters, etc. in 'Other publications'.
- EMBO will consider papers published on preprint servers (arXiv, BioRxiv, PeerJ., etc). However, at least one last author paper in an international peer reviewed journal must have "accepted" status by the day of the interview.
- If a publication from your independent group is co-authored by your former supervisor, please briefly explain their contribution.
- EMBO is a signatory of DORA and does not use journal-based metrics such as impact factor during the assessment process. **Please do NOT include these in your publications list.**
- Please underline your three best publications (see below).

## Your three best publications

- Provide details of your three best publications, including a summary and a short explanation of why you chose each one (max. 1000 characters including spaces).

## Research plan

Describe the research topics of your lab in no more than three pages, excluding bibliography.

- Include a short introduction to your research topic considering that the scientific expertise of the committee is diverse and briefly mention your past achievements.
- Explain why your scientific question is relevant, where your independent research is progressing and what its potential impact is.
- Emphasise the future directions of your lab, giving just enough details of your experimental plan to capture its novelty and feasibility. Be specific, clear, and concise.
- The proposed research objectives should not be too broad. Applications that describe too broad a topic are generally not selected.
- Do not copy/paste the research summary you provided on the online application form or an abstract of one of your publications.
- Figures are included in the page count. They can be added by using copy/paste or by dragging a jpg/png file into the text if the “insert” menu is not available.

## Networking

The EMBO Global Investigator Network provides programme members with a grant which specifically supports training and networking activities, fostering opportunities to establish new collaborations with scientists in their region and in Europe.

In this section, describe how the programme will benefit you, your career, and your group members.

# **4. Selection procedure**

---

All incoming applications are screened by the EMBO Global Activities office to ensure that they are complete and the eligibility requirements are met. Candidates receive a confirmation that their application has been received within the next 2-3 working days. Candidates who are considered ineligible will be given a couple of days to appeal or provide more information about their application.

## **4.1. Pre-selection**

Eligible applications are sent to the EMBO Global Investigator Network Committee for screening. Each application is independently evaluated by four committee members. The EMBO Global Investigator Network Committee Guidelines can be found on the [EMBO website](#).

The committee pre-selects around 20 candidates, who are invited to present their research in an online interview. All candidates are informed of the outcome of their application by email.

## **4.2. External evaluation by an EMBO Member**

Each pre-selected application is sent for confidential review to an EMBO Member with expertise in the candidate's area of research to provide an additional assessment to the committee. Candidates will be given the opportunity in advance to exclude EMBO Members from reviewing their application to avoid potential conflicts of interest. The EMBO Members send a written report of their review to the EMBO Office. This assessment focuses on the candidates' standing in the field and the feasibility of their proposed work. These reports are shared with the Global Investigator Network Committee members and considered in the evaluation process.

## **4.3. Panel interview**

Pre-selected candidates are interviewed individually by the EMBO Global Investigator Network Committee using a panel interview format. The interviews take place in a hybrid format: committee members are present on-site, and the candidates are connected remotely (via Zoom). The interviews are conducted by two sub-panels in parallel, each panel consisting of 5 members of the Global Investigator Network Committee (a list of current committee members can be found on page 2 of this guide).

Pre-selected candidates must prepare a 10-minute presentation summarising their current projects and future research directions. The EMBO Global Activities office will provide detailed instructions and tips on how to prepare the presentations approximately two months before the interview.

The candidate's presentation is followed by 10 minutes of discussion with the committee.

All candidates will be required to submit a backup video of their presentation in advance. This will be shared with the interview panel in case of connection issues, in which case candidates will be asked to dial in via phone to complete the Q&A part of the interview.

## 4.4. Final selection

A final decision is made after the interviews by the whole EMBO Global Investigator Network Committee. Annually, 8 to 10 new EMBO Global Investigators are selected.

All candidates are notified of the outcome of their application by email within a week of the interview.

In case of rejection, pre-selected candidates receive feedback from the committee on their written application and interview performance.

**Please do not contact the committee members directly.** This may lead to your application being excluded from the review process. Any requests should be addressed to the EMBO Global Activities office ([global@embo.org](mailto:global@embo.org)).

# 5. Selection criteria

---

EMBO is looking for the best and most promising independent researchers that have recently established their laboratories in Chile, India, Singapore, and Taiwan. Although a geographically balanced set of selected network members is desirable, the primary selection criterion applied by all EMBO Committees is scientific excellence.

EMBO is a signatory of the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) and as such does not use publication metrics such as the Journal Impact Factor during the assessment process (see <https://sfdora.org> for further details). Applicants are asked NOT to include publication metrics in their publication list.

The following aspects of each application are evaluated in all phases of the selection process:

### TRACK RECORD

Criteria for evaluating the track record:

- Scientific achievements and professional development to date: Are they an indication that this is an outstanding scientist?
- Scientific breadth: Has the applicant shown a willingness to change research area or the ability to tackle new and important problems?

### RESEARCH

Criteria for evaluating the research:

- Ambition: Is the proposed research ambitious and likely to lead to novel contributions in the field?
- Potential for leadership: Does the applicant have the potential to become a future leader in their field?

## **GROUP AND RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT**

Criteria for evaluating the group and research environment:

- Group size and funding sources: Are the number and the expertise of laboratory members and the available funds sufficient to undertake the described research?
- Host institute: Is the research environment conducive to competitive research?

## **INDEPENDENCE**

Criteria for evaluating the candidate's independence:

- Operational independence:
  - Is the candidate financially independent, able to apply for grants in their own name, and report directly to funding agencies?
  - Is the candidate able to submit manuscripts as last author (“corresponding author” is not necessarily considered equivalent to “last author”).
  - Is the candidate responsible for supervising graduate students and/or postdocs in their own lab?
- Intellectual independence: What is the influence of former supervisors and institute heads on the candidate's current research?